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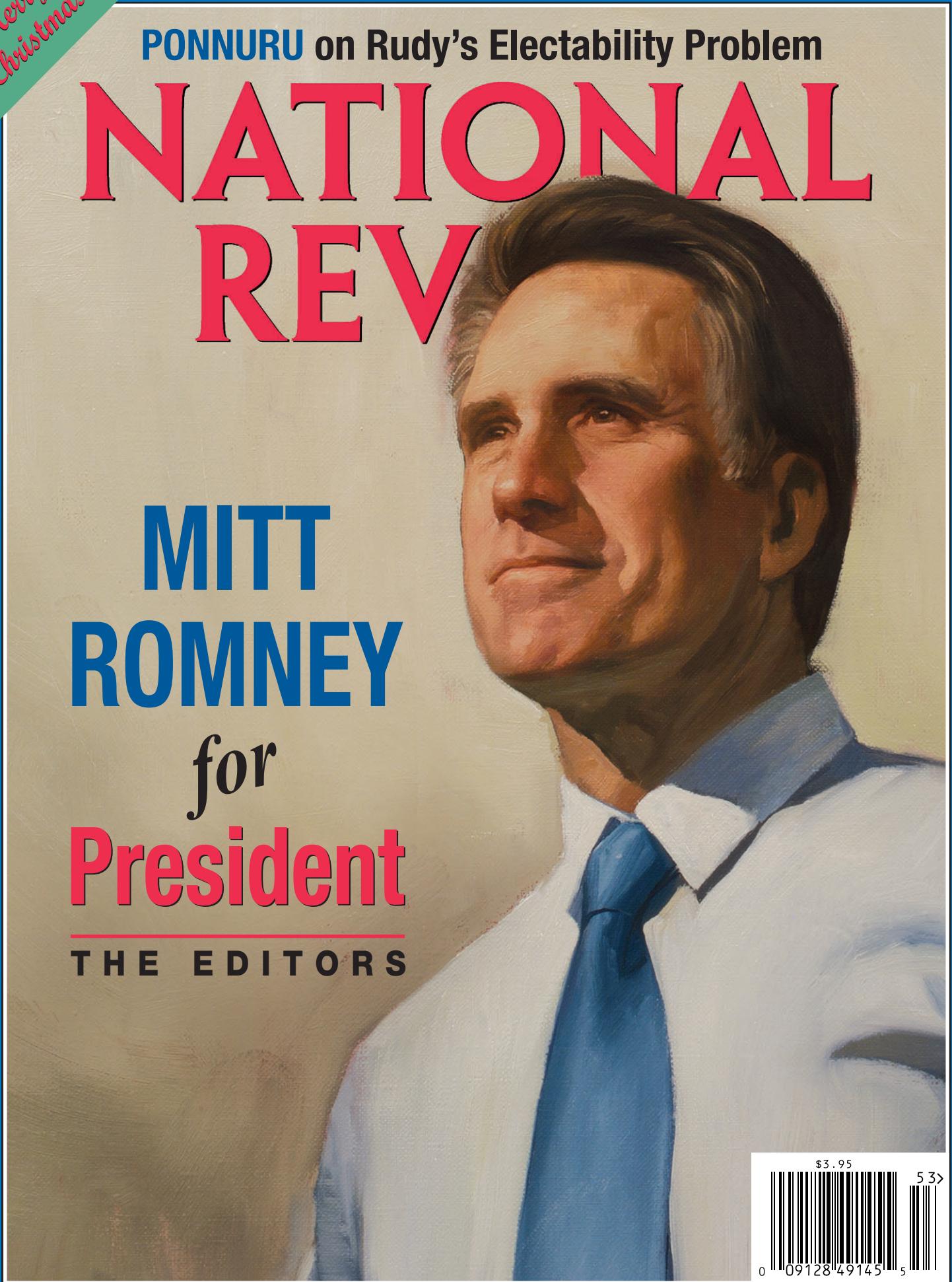

MITT ROMNEY *for* President

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NATIONAL REVIEW

DECEMBER 31, 2007 VOL. LIX, NO. 24

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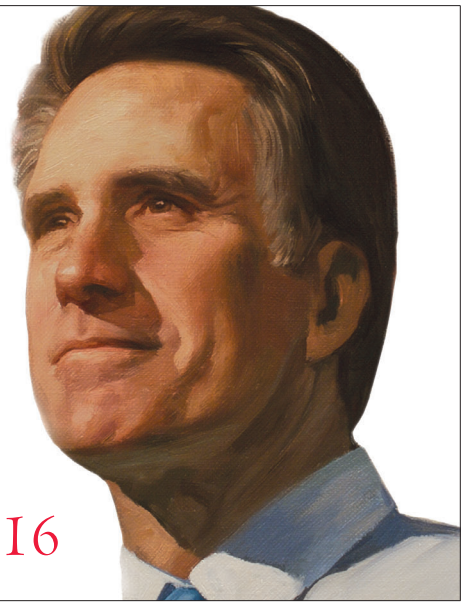
■ ON THE COVER

Romney for President

Our guiding principle has always been to select the most conservative viable candidate. In our judgment, that candidate is Mitt Romney. Unlike some other candidates in the race, Romney is a full-spectrum conservative: a supporter of free-market economics and limited government, moral causes such as the right to life and the preservation of marriage, and a foreign policy based on the national interest. *By the Editors*

Page 16



ARTICLES

20 The Horror of Huck *by Jonah Goldberg*
We have seen this act in the Republican party before—recently.

22 A National Disgrace *by Jason Lee Steorts*
The recent National Intelligence Estimate is outrageously—possibly dangerously—misleading.

24 The Gospel Truth? *by John J. Miller*
Questions about that Judas manuscript.

28 'Electable,' They Say *by Ramesh Ponnuru*
The myth of Giuliani as Hillary-slayer.

30 Among Evangelicals, a Transformation *by Peter Wehner*
They're not 'cracking up,' as some contend, or hope; they are, however, changing.

33 The Problem of My Country
by Vladimir Bukovsky, with Pavel Stroilov
A dissident looks homeward.

36 A Christmas Carol *by Aloïse Buckley Heath*
A Heath family Christmas-carol program always seems like a good idea . . .

COVER: *Roberto Parada*

BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

42 Parallel Lives and Legacies—*Arthur W. Herman* . . . Forge of Empires: Three Revolutionary Statesmen and the World They Made, 1861–1871, *by Michael Knox Beran*

44 D'Souza and the Divine—*David Klinghoffer* . . . What's So Great About Christianity, *by Dinesh D'Souza*

46 Green Death?—*Steven F. Hayward* . . . Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility, *by Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger*

49 Music: Beautiful Collecting—Jay Nordlinger on a pair of extraordinary discophiles.

51 Film: His Didactic Materials—Ross Douthat reviews *The Golden Compass*.

52 The Straggler: Maps and Chaps—John Derbyshire, cartophiliac.

SECTIONS

2 Letters
8 The Week
39 The Long View
40 Help!
46 Poetry
54 On the Right
56 Happy Warrior

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letters to the editor

THE BOOK ON McCARTHY

Having been around the block a time or two, I guess nothing should surprise me, but I have to admit I was profoundly shocked by Ronald Radosh's onslaught against my work—and honor—in what professed to be a review of my new book about Senator Joe McCarthy ("The Enemy Within," Dec. 17).

Had this Radosh effusion appeared in *The New Republic* or *Washington Post*—where it would have been more fitting—I probably wouldn't have bothered to reply. As it appeared instead in the once-beloved pages of NATIONAL REVIEW, with which I have been connected since its inception, I can hardly let these poisonous charges against my writing, and my character, go unanswered.

Though there may be some people qualified by their expertise to read me a condescending lecture in the matter of Joe McCarthy, Ronald Radosh is not among them. As shown throughout his curious essay, his lack of knowledge is extensive, bizarrely so in certain cases, and made the worse by the strange inventions with which the discourse is salted. How someone who knows so little about a topic can set up shop as an Olympian arbiter of it is quite a puzzle.

Consider in this respect Radosh's handling of what was arguably the most famous episode in the whole McCarthy saga—the June 1954 confrontation in the Army–McCarthy hearings between McCarthy and Army counsel Joseph Welch. In discussing my treatment of this encounter, Radosh concedes the point that I am making—that Welch's "have you no decency" plaint was an act—but then adds the truly incredible statement: "*But the hearing's larger question was about the promotion of Army dentist Irving Peress to a higher rank—and Evans's claims of the supposed dangers surrounding the dentist's promotion do not hold up.*"

This comment is so astounding I re-read it a couple of times to make sure I wasn't missing something, but there it is: The larger question of the Welch–McCarthy confrontation was the Peress case. But as everyone knows who knows anything about the matter, this is absurdly false. The colloquy in question and the hearing of which it was a part had nothing to do with the Peress case, but were focused on the issue of Fort Monmouth—an entirely separate topic. Welch was baiting McCarthy staffer Roy Cohn about an intelligence report relating to alleged subversion at Monmouth, and why Cohn hadn't delivered this by the fastest possible method to the Secretary of the Army. It was in the course of this harangue that McCarthy brought up the matter of Welch aide Frederick Fisher and his former membership in the National Lawyers Guild, prompting Welch's famous challenge.

None of this had the slightest connection to Peress, who wasn't involved with Monmouth, had been stationed elsewhere, and was the subject of other, separate proceedings. Different person, different Army base, different hearings. From all of which it's apparent that Ronald Radosh is clueless on the topic—doesn't know the first thing about it and apparently can't be troubled to find out, which he might easily have done by reading the relevant sets of hearings. This bespeaks not only ignorance of the issues but a reckless indifference to the claims of fact that is remarkable in any context—the more so considering his lofty pose as an authority on McCarthyana.

(Radosh's comment about my "claims" concerning the Peress case also happens to be false, but there are so many errors of this nature in his review that I can't possibly answer them all in a single letter.)

A similar indifference to facts of record appears in the Radosh treatment of other cases. Notable among these is yet another famous episode, the testimony of Annie Lee Moss, a black woman working as a code clerk for the Army who got called before the McCarthy panel. Mrs. Moss having been named as a member of the Communist Party by

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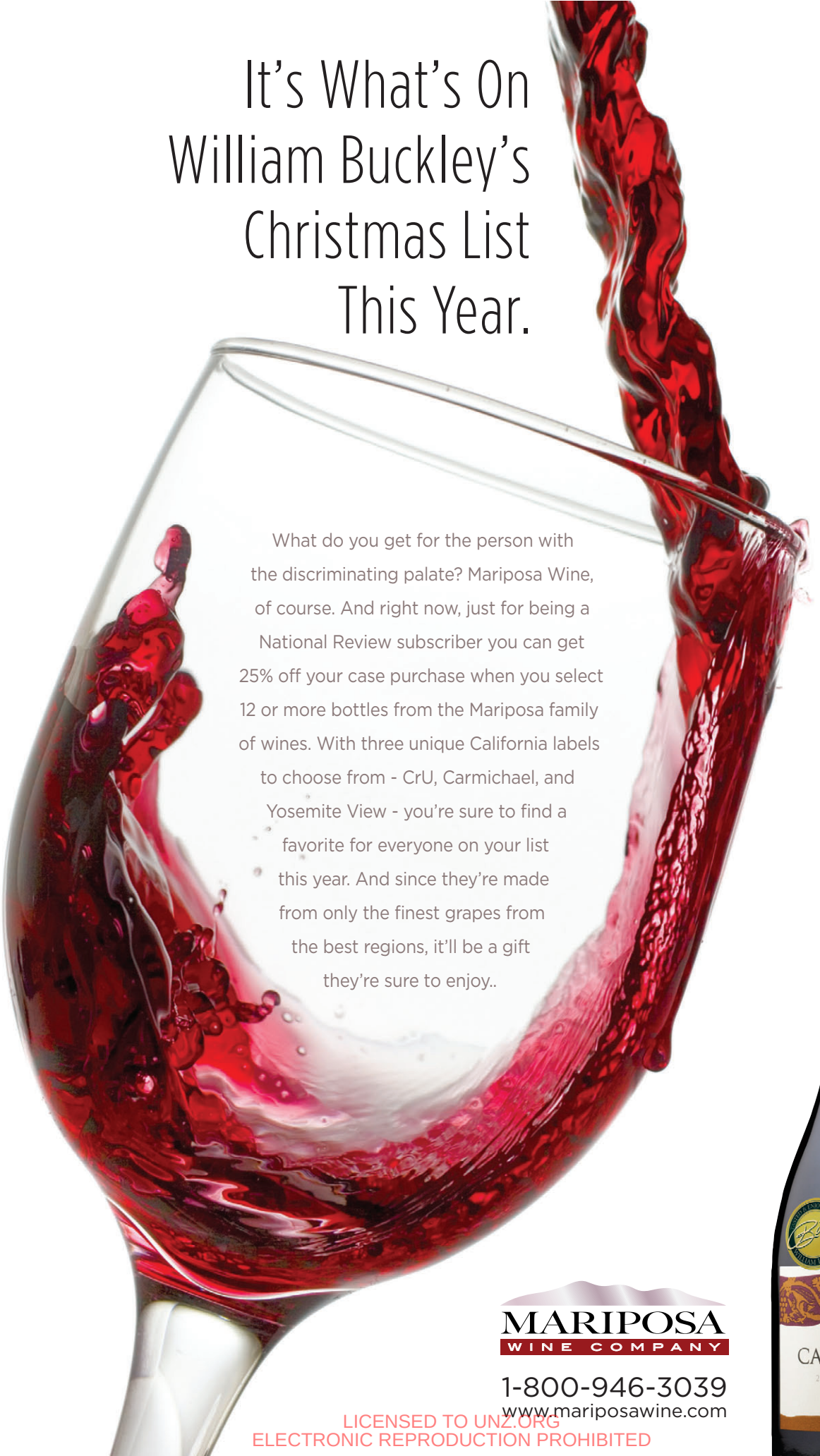
It's What's On William Buckley's Christmas List This Year.



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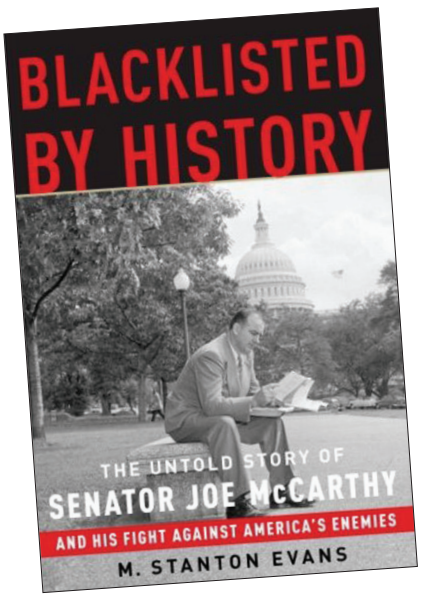
FBI undercover operative Mary Markward, McCarthy wondered how someone so identified could get a position as an Army code clerk. Mrs. Moss's answer was that they had nailed the wrong person, that some other Annie Lee Moss was really the culprit they were after. The case was immortalized by Edward R. Murrow in his TV show back in the 1950s and by actor-filmmaker George Clooney in a Murrow-worshipping movie of 2005.

I devote a chapter to the Moss case, with references to official records, including long-classified archives of the FBI. According to Radosh, however, a great failing of my book is that I am simply repeating things long known to experts such as himself—"well-trod ground" as he puts it—and my treatment of the Moss case is allegedly of this nature. What I have to say about the case, per the yawning Radosh, practically nodding off from boredom, was already said in 1983 by liberal anti-McCarthy biographer David Oshinsky—"so this, too, is not new." This comment further shows Radosh knows nothing of the matters he's discussing, obviously hasn't studied the case, and doesn't even seem to have read my chapter on it. My treatment is nothing like Oshinsky's—whose discussion would lead the reader to believe that the FBI confirmation of Moss's CP membership was based on the say-so of Markward.

My version is quite different, showing that the FBI had in its possession the records of the Communist Party, and wasn't simply relying on the word of Markward. The Bureau records, part of which I photographically reproduce, reveal that Mrs. Moss was indeed a member of the Communist Party, that Army officials themselves had been trying to have her ousted as a security risk only to be overruled at higher levels, and that the FBI had clearly explained the facts about the case to the Democratic contingent on the McCarthy panel a good two weeks before the Democrats and the sainted Murrow floated the bogus story of multiple Annie Lee Mosses. All this may be found in the records of the FBI, but none of it in the pages of Oshinsky, or the musings of Ronald Radosh.

As important as such factual bloopers, in some ways even more so, is the manner in which Radosh fills gaps in his knowledge with reversals of the empirical record in which he represents me as saying the exact opposite of what I have actually written. This happens so frequently as to suggest a deliberate tactic—apparently on the premise that, if I didn't say something or other in defense of Joe McCarthy, I should have, so that's how



Radosh describes it. Following are a few examples:

Radosh says: "*In a similar fashion, Evans supports McCarthy's outrageous assertion about Gen. George C. Marshall.*" I in fact wrote the opposite, in several places, to wit: "McCarthy was quite right that an immense conspiracy was afoot—especially with regard to China—*though erring as to the role of Marshall*. . . . Without trying to rehash the long career of Marshall, a few examples may be cited to suggest *the factual errors in McCarthy's thesis*. . . . *McCarthy made his share of errors* . . . [among them] *the Marshall speech* . . . ."

(The "immense conspiracy" involved in all of this, by the way, included a high-level U.S. scheme during World War II to murder our anti-Communist ally Chiang Kai-shek, repeated aid cut-offs to injure Chiang in his struggle with the Chinese Reds, and a State Department plot to overthrow him through a military *coup d'état* when he sought refuge on Formosa-Taiwan. All of this is documented in my book, but apparently qualifies as more old-hat material well-known and boring to experts such as Radosh, which is perhaps why he doesn't mention any of it.)

On the related case of Owen Lattimore, Radosh says: "*Evans seeks to justify McCarthy . . . by bending evidence to imply, without proof, that perhaps Lattimore was a spy.*" Bending evidence? I in fact wrote—*contra* the statements of leftward McCarthy antagonist Millard Tydings that the FBI file on Lattimore contained *no* charges of espionage—that the files show such charges did exist in fair profusion and were being avidly followed up by the Bureau. To which I added: "As the investigation was ongoing, and the redacted fragments are hard to judge, this doesn't mean the charges were true, or that if they had once been true that they remained so in 1950. . . . As to whether such charges were valid when McCarthy made his later retracted 'espionage' allegation, given the condition of the files, it's hard to judge, but the probabilities are against it (and even if the charges were true it's hard to see how McCarthy could have proved them)."

In defending Lattimore from such charges, Radosh devotes a fair amount of space to bashing ex-Communist Louis Budenz, who repeatedly and quite credibly testified that Lattimore had been named to him by Communist leaders as a propagandist for the party (and, incidentally, it's sad to see the long-playing left-wing smear campaign against Budenz being parroted in the pages of NR). But Budenz didn't testify that Lattimore was engaged in Soviet intelligence operations or spying. That testimony came from former Soviet official Alexander Barmine, who told the FBI and the McCarran committee that Lattimore and his sidekick, Joseph Barnes, had been identified to him in the 1930s as Soviet intelligence agents. Radosh, accusing me of "bending evidence," somehow neglects to note this.

On yet another front, Radosh writes: "*He [Evans] does not emphasize, al-*

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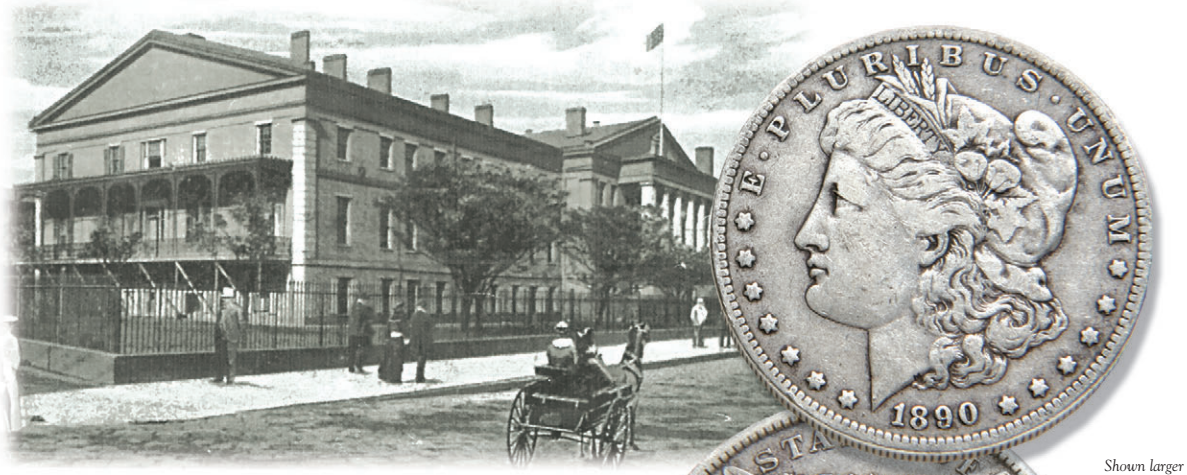

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though his own data make it clear, that most of the knowledge about these people came before McCarthy was on the scene." This is in some ways the most remarkable statement of all, as I repeatedly say the reverse, almost to the point of monotony, e.g.: "As the records clearly show, his [McCarthy's] lists of cases and much of his information about subversion in the Federal government were derived from rosters previously put together by the FBI, State Department security screeners, and some of his congressional colleagues. . . . In the typical instance, McCarthy's charges broke no new ground"—and many other comments of like nature.

This is going pretty heavy on the quotations, but they are offered to suggest what degree of trust may be placed in the assertions and paraphrases of Radosh as to the contents of my book. As these instances suggest, that degree of trust is roughly speaking zero. All of which is very bad, but from my standpoint by no means the worst of it. Far more disturbing is a recurring ad hominem element in Radosh's comments—revealing a nasty penchant for turning a debate about substantive issues into a species of personal slander.

At one point, discussing the *Amerasia* case of 1945 in which official documents were funneled to a pro-Red publication and the facts about this hidden from the public, Radosh writes, "*Evans tries hard to make it appear the cover-up was something he discovered.*" (No evidence is presented for this snide assertion, nor could it be, for none exists.) Even worse, in referring to a book he and Prof. Harvey Klehr published on the *Amerasia* case in 1996, Radosh parenthetically says this was "*a book from which Evans takes virtually all of his material and which he does not acknowledge.*" This vicious statement is an astounding, and outrageous, lie. My documentation of the *Amerasia* fix, cover-up, grand-jury rigging, wiretapping, and so on is derived from the files of the FBI here in Washington, several thousand pages of which I have in my possession, accumulated over a span of years. It owes nothing to the Klehr-Radosh book, as may readily be seen by scanning my end-notes and comparing these to their annotations, which are based on an entirely different indexing system, so that one isn't transposable to the other.

On the merits of the Klehr-Radosh book itself, I should add that I have the utmost respect for Harvey Klehr, an eminent scholar of these matters, and gave the book a favorable review when it appeared a decade ago—even though I am personally criticized in it (a rare experience, I should think, in book-reviewing circles). But I derived none of my FBI documentation from it, provide material that isn't featured in it, and conversely don't cover matters that it covers because my materials differed in form and content from those collected at Emory University, which has its own archive of FBI files pertaining to *Amerasia*, a main source of the Klehr-Radosh data.

(A single overlapping item from this source, unrelated to the fix or the FBI, is a photo of Lattimore et al., obtained by my publisher from Emory with full and proper acknowledgment given.)

I have now been a journalist for upward of 50 years, most of them with some connection or other to NATIONAL REVIEW. In all that span, many things have been said about me and my work, not all of them positive in nature. But at no point in my career has anyone to my knowledge ever accused me of plagiarism, one of the most serious charges that can be leveled at a professional writer. Nor do I recall even my most determined left-liberal foes, however much they might disagree with me, accusing me of being in any way dishonest. It remained for these sinister charges to be made in the year 2007 by Ronald Radosh—in the pages of NATIONAL REVIEW. What all that says about Radosh, NATIONAL REVIEW, and me, I leave to the judgment of the reader.

M. Stanton Evans
Washington, D.C.

RONALD RADOSH RESPONDS: Stan Evans is overreacting. He implies that a conservative publication must defend Joe McCarthy. Charging that I wrote an assault on his character and honor rather than a review, he proceeds to do to me precisely what he has accused me of doing to him, making "poisonous charges" and engaging in "personal slander" as well as writing that I am not qualified to write anything about McCarthy, even though I have been writing on Communism, anti-Communism, and McCarthyism for many years, in the pages of NR as well as elsewhere.

Space restraints preclude responding to all of his points, but here a few examples of his overreaction. Evans argues that I accused him of plagiarism for failing to make any reference to an earlier book on the Amerasia case by Harvey Klehr and myself. The only problem is that I never wrote anywhere that Evans plagiarized our book. I only noted that he ignored its findings and trumpeted his "discovery" of the Amerasia cover-up, while ignoring those portions of the FBI files he read that contradicted his claim that John Service was a Soviet agent. His publicity material singles out his discussion and states that Evans shows "that a cabal of White House, Justice Department, and State Department officials lied about and covered up one of the major spy cases McCarthy disclosed, the *Amerasia* scandal." This is precisely what Klehr and I did 20 years ago, and his own discussion adds little to our findings. He argues in his letter that his own discussion is based on FBI files in his possession. In his book he has block quotations from the FBI wiretaps. These are precisely from the wiretap files we found and uncovered first in an article published in *The New Republic*. Why does Evans not cite our work anywhere in his book, although he acknowledges that he himself reviewed it favorably when it appeared?

In the case of Annie Lee Moss, Evans writes that Moss has been viewed as "the quintessential McCarthy martyr." He correctly calls it the most "famous of all McCarthy cases," popularized as a case of mistaken identity repeated in all "the standard histories" as well as by George Clooney in his recent film *Good Night and Good Luck*. Evans chastises me for claiming that David Oshinsky told the story about her accurately in his

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THE WEEK

■ Up next on *Oprah*, "Men Who Love Themselves Too Much, and the Women Who Endorse Them."

■ Asked about his lack of foreign-policy experience on the revived Don Imus radio show, Mike Huckabee compared himself to Ronald Reagan. The former California governor had no foreign-policy experience either before entering the White House, according to Huckabee. Reagan had, however, thought and argued about the Cold War for decades before being elected. What are Huckabee's foreign-policy views? So far as they can be discerned from a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and his stray comments on the campaign trail, they are basically that we have not been nice enough to foreign countries. At CSIS, he criticized the Bush administration for its "bunker mentality" and backed talking with Iran the way you'd talk "to a parent, or a sibling, or even a friend." He has said, "You treat others the way you'd like to be treated. That's to me the fundamental issue that has to be reestablished in our dealings with other countries." But the Golden Rule does not translate so easily to international relations. Huckabee should work to deepen his knowledge of foreign affairs. Reading Reagan's pre-presidential speeches, radio addresses, and articles would be a good start.

■ Huckabee released a sensible plan to fight illegal immigration—largely borrowed from our pages, as his campaign generously acknowledges—but it's his record in Arkansas that has been getting attention, little of it flattering. Running for the Senate in 1992, he argued for quarantining AIDS patients. As governor, he pushed to release convicted rapist Wayne DuMond from prison, in part because Huckabee's friend, fellow Baptist minister Jay Cole, had taken up the cause. DuMond sexually assaulted and killed a woman after being released. Huckabee has not been entirely forthright about his role in this matter. The connecting thread between these two negative stories about Huckabee is not that he is an evangelical Christian. It is that he has run in the past, and is still running, on his evangelicalism. That campaign strategy has given him the lead in Iowa and second place in the national polls. But it raises difficulties beyond these two stories. Liberals think that religious politicking in a pluralistic country is dangerous, but it is a free country and people can campaign and vote as they want. The real drawback is that these kinds of religious appeals are counterproductive in a pluralistic country. Evangelicals alone cannot win the nomination, much less the general election. To build a winning coalition, Huckabee must keep his base excited but also transcend it, which he has shown little interest in doing.

■ Oprah Winfrey stumped for Barack Obama in Iowa and South Carolina. Miss Winfrey is, without question, the most

ROMAN GENN

important woman in America; overall, she is a force for good, a black female Benjamin Franklin, offering uplift and useful advice. Straying into politics for patently racial reasons is a risk for her, but she has negotiated other speed bumps in her career with ease, and will surely be at her post after the next president leaves office. What she said in Obama's favor was nonsense. "You can't be fooled by this experience question because you know it's not the amount of time you spend with your child, it's the quality of that time." America as a nursery: just the message for a time of war, overspending, and global competition. But the audience ate it up, since the Democrats are the party of children, desperate to be suckled. And Hillary Clinton must be sweating bullets.

■ Joe Biden on the hustings in New Hampshire said that if President Bush bombed Iran without congressional approval, he should be impeached. This is debatable constitutional territory. But when a Democratic voter asked why Bush should not be impeached already, Biden demurred, then suggested impeaching Vice President Cheney first, which naturally brought applause. Biden is an intelligent man, and has been a responsible senator. But he feels for the sound of his own voice

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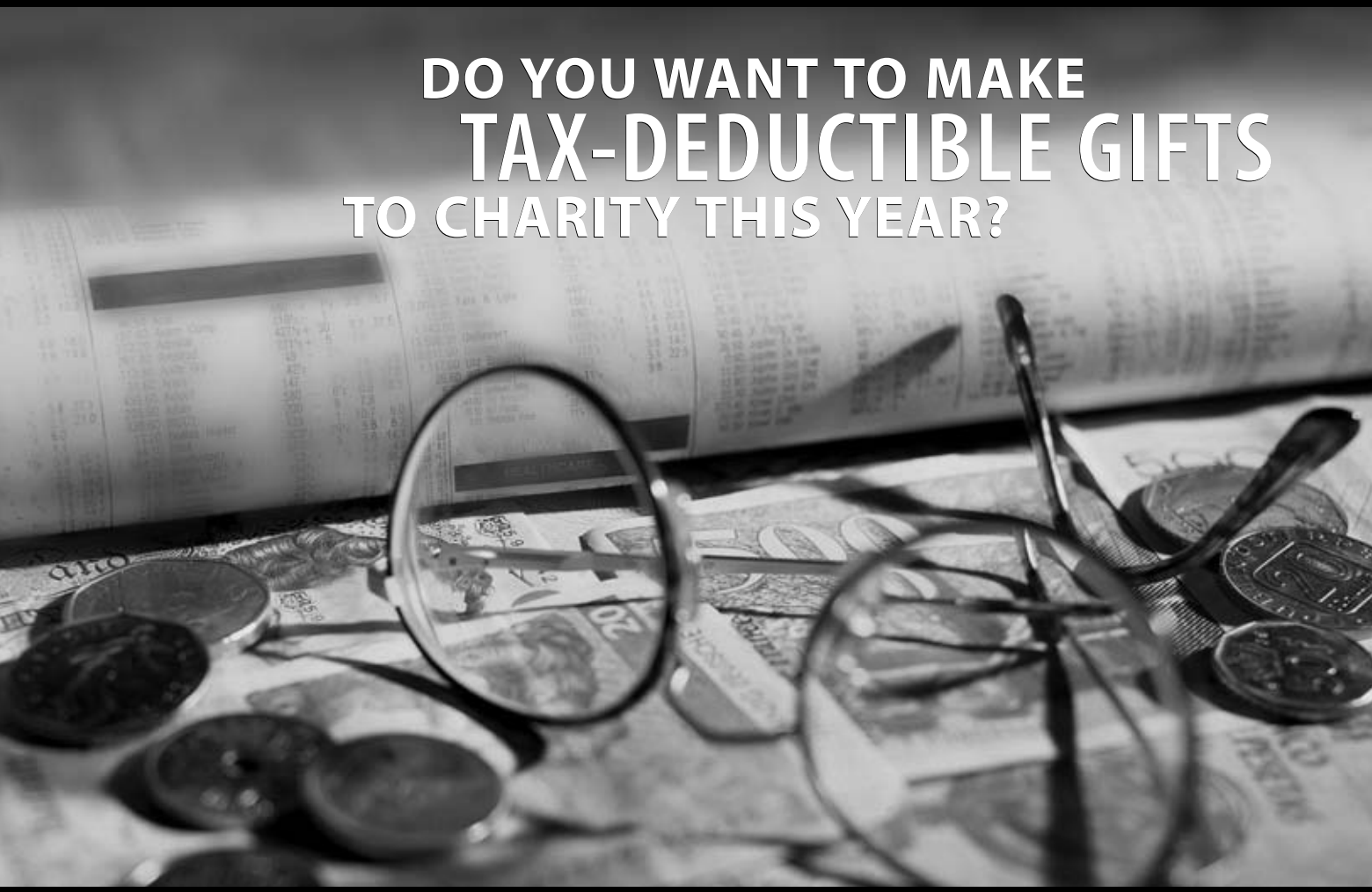

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The Week...

what an alcoholic feels for the bottle, or an addict for the syringe. His logomania led him into plagiarism 20 years ago (when he orated Neil Kinnock's life story as his own), and has led him into fatuity ever since. We know no 12-step program for the ailment; some time in a Benedictine monastery or a Quaker meeting might be helpful.

■ The anti-war outfit VoteVets.org has lost a major star. John Batiste, a retired major general who commanded the 1st Infantry Division in Iraq, was a VoteVets board member and recorded an ad for them in May in which he called the surge "a failed strategy that is breaking our great Army and Marine Corps." But Batiste has since changed his tune, and his friends. On December 8, he co-authored an op-ed in the *Washington Post* with Peter Hegseth, executive director of the pro-war Vets for Freedom, in which they called General Petraeus's campaign "the correct approach in Iraq" and pushed for stiff "pressure on the Iranian regime." We're glad of his support and his change of heart, glad that he can see clearly what our troops still in the fight already know. As the authors put it, "It's time to discuss the way forward rather than prosecute the past. Congress must do the same, for our nation and the troops."

■ The Alternative Minimum Tax was designed to hit the rich. But because of the way it is structured—among other things, it has never been adjusted for inflation—it hits more and more taxpayers each year. Instead of changing the tax, Congress traditionally passes a one-year "patch" to keep it from affecting more taxpayers. Now that they have Congress, Democrats vowed that they would raise other taxes to balance this tax relief. Republicans, reasoning that this departure from past practice would cause revenues to increase sharply, called this plan a tax increase. Senate Democrats have thrown in the towel, passing a patch without tax increases. Some observers think the economy is headed for a recession. Nancy Pelosi must now decide if it is a good moment to fight for higher taxes than even her Senate colleagues are seeking.

■ On Nov. 20, scientists announced that they had discovered a way to create stem cells with the same potential as embryonic stem cells—but instead of destroying embryos, they had done it by "reprogramming" adult cells. Supporters of the embryo-destructive research, especially Democrats, started to carp. The Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank, said that it would take years for scientists to figure out how to keep the new methods from causing tumors. Instead it took less than two weeks. Sooner or later, the naysayers are going to have to face the fact that we have had some good news.

■ President Bush announced an agreement with the big mortgage banks that would purportedly stem the tide of falling home prices and rising foreclosure rates. Under the plan, mortgage lenders across the board would allow borrowers who can't afford higher payments to keep paying the low, "teaser" rate on their adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs). Some borrowers took out ARMs they could not afford in the expectation that their home values would increase a lot, and that they could thus sell or refinance, before their rates jumped. Now many such borrowers are in trouble because housing prices are falling, but that is a risk most of them took with their eyes wide open. Perhaps they were prescient enough to foresee big government coming to their rescue if things got bad enough.

■ Hugo Chávez expected, and was expected by others, to win handily the Venezuelan referendum that inter alia would have installed him in power permanently. Official figures say it was defeated narrowly, which suggests that he in fact lost heavily. Many of his earlier supporters must have voted against him. If media reports are accurate, they did so because they valued democracy. If Chávez decides to push the referendum a second time, as he has hinted he might, he could probably win only by blatant cheating and arm-twisting. It is far from certain that the armed forces, his original and most important power base, would support an openly undemocratic election. But he has the resources to attempt an internal coup, if not to ensure its success. To provide for that eventuality, the Bush administration should ask the Organization of American States to embark on contingency plans for isolating and containing an undemocratic Chávez regime.

DMITRY ASTAKHOV/AFP

■ Vladimir Putin is giving a master class in modern dictatorship. Rigging the recent parliamentary election was child's play, because he had the political parties, the media, and big business under his thumb. There was no need to arrest opposition leaders, stuff ballot boxes, and intimidate voters in selected areas, but the secret police took those precautions on his behalf. This March, his second term as president expires, and the constitution forbids him a third consecutive term. Simple: Just rewrite the constitution. But Putin was too smart for that. He has announced that Dmitri Medvedev will have his backing in the presidential election, a fact that amounts to appointment. Forty-two now, Medvedev has been a Putin loyalist for years. He is a lawyer, the chairman of the board of Gazprom, the giant state gas monopoly, but he has no political base whatsoever. Putin is expected to control him the way a ventriloquist does his puppet. Medvedev began his performance with the immediate promise that as president he would appoint Putin his prime minister. After a break in that office, the constitution would allow Putin to become president again. Perfect! No wonder Putin admires Stalin and laments the breakdown of the Soviet Union. A caveat is in order, however. Should Medvedev learn the lesson properly and be true to form in the Kremlin, he is likely to devise some even more perfidious way to outmaneuver his master.

■ At Annapolis, Mahmoud Abbas "agreed" to reach a final settlement with the Israeli government and create a

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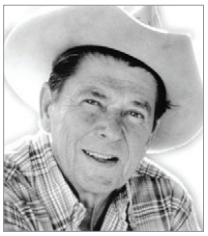

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THE WEEK...

Palestinian state by the end of 2008. A hundred thousand angry Palestinians protested against him in Gaza that same day. Since then, the Hamas-dominated Palestinian assembly has been hard at work pushing through a law that would make it illegal—"high treason," no less—for any Palestinian leader to make concessions to Israel on Jerusalem. Many Fatah legislators back the law too. 'Tis the season of miracles, but all the same we must be skeptical that Annapolis will prove to have done any good. Its main effect seems to have been weakening the already-weak Abbas, and inflaming Palestinian audacity.

■ In coming days the British are to hand over their responsibilities in southern Iraq to the local army and police. The intention is to cut the 4,500 British troops to 2,500 by next March, and presumably withdraw those soon afterward on the grounds that so small a force is in no position to do anything useful. American personnel will have to replace them, and make sure that their own supply lines are protected. The Shiite militia in Basra city and province are a murderous lot, true enough, but they have been much encouraged by the British refusal to take them head-on. Dismayed, the Iraqi general

Merry Holidays!

I BELIEVE there's something to the idea that there is a "war on Christmas." Yes, the ACLU and its partisans trod through the mossy and hallowed corners of our society spewing bleach and other sterilizing defoliants on the treasured Old Growth of traditional culture. They scorch the land so that it will be safe for the cold paving stones of a secular society, where the only permissible public pieties are those offered up to multicultural idols on statist altars. Exterminators' pesticide tanks strapped to their backs, they prime the pump and open the spigot at the first sight of Christmas crèches or menorahs on their own version of hallowed ground: public property.

I couldn't have agreed more when Mitt Romney, in his "Faith in America" address, said: "Religion is seen as merely a private affair with no place in public life. It is as if [some] are intent on establishing a new religion in America—the religion of secularism."

It's worth noting that this is an old lament, older than Romney's Mormon faith. The history of socialism begins with a war on traditional religion. Perhaps most tellingly, both Marx and Engels came to their socialism through their atheism, not the other way around. They denied God first, and tried to take His place second. Josh Muravchik titled his magnificent history of socialism *Heaven on Earth* for a reason. From the outset, the champions of socialism believed they could create a heaven on earth only by debunking the idea that there was a heaven anywhere else. John Reed proclaimed amidst the slaughter of the Bolshevik Revolution, "On earth they were building a kingdom more bright than any heaven had to offer, and for which it was a glory to die."

The secularists of today hardly have such steel in their spine or cruelty in their hearts. But the battle lines can still be found in the scarred terra firma of Western civilization, and the din of old clashes are still echoing off the walls of cable-TV studios.

Which brings me back to the war on Christmas. In many respects it is a two-front war. But conservatives in America very rarely pay attention to the fact that, while the extremists of the Left seek to purge the public square of Christmas in its entirety, the Right—in the form of capitalism—seeks to water down Christmas almost everywhere else. Each year a Wal-Mart or a K-Mart, a Sears or a Home Depot, arouses the ire of patriots for Christmas who cannot stomach the use of "holiday trees" on its signs or "Happy Holidays!" in its TV commercials. Often these Yuletide partisans will try to suggest that Big Business is caving to political correctness. And there's some truth to that, to be sure. But there's something else going on: Businesses like to make money from everybody. It is in their interest to appeal to as many "holiday" shoppers as they can, be they Jews, Muslims, atheists, or pagans.

I'm not trying to defend the practice altogether. Jesus's question—What does it profit a man to gain the world but lose his own soul?—seems ecumenically apt enough. Some things aren't for sale at any price. Still, there's a nice irony here. Capitalism, which the Marxists believed was the most alienating of forces ever to be created by man (or by a cold material dialectic, take your pick), turns out to be better at bringing people together and bridging differences—between rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, atheist and believer—than the socialists or their secularist descendants ever were. And Wal-Mart couldn't care less about menorahs or crèches in the public square—so long as they were bought you-know-where.

—JONAH GOLDBERG

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The Week...

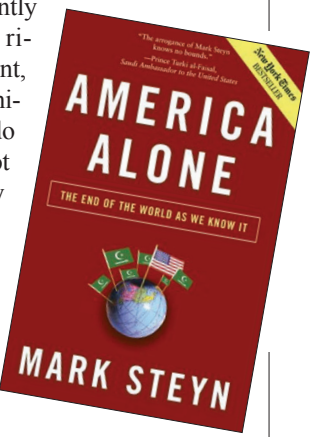
commanding the Basra police explains that he faces hardships because his weaponry is "insufficient to maintain full control." Expect bloodshed, then. Internal British politics are determining this outcome. According to public perception, the invasion of Iraq brought down Tony Blair. Gordon Brown, his successor as prime minister, and more a long-term rival than a colleague, hopes to gain credit by reversing the Blair legacy. Visiting the troops in Basra to tell them about the end of their combat role, he made a speech stressing the virtue of courage and citing Winston Churchill and Field Marshal Montgomery. That's the language especially dear to someone running up the white flag.

■ Gillian Gibbons, a British teacher in a Sudanese school, let her students name a class teddy bear. Unfortunately, they chose to call their stuffed pet Mohammed. Miss Gibbons found herself jailed for 15 days on a charge of blasphemy, while mobs outside her prison howled that she should be executed. After some polite harrumphs from Britain, she was released, having served eight days. One notes, as a matter of sociology, that Islam in its current incarnation seems to offer a larger pool of stupid angry men than other world religions. But one must not discount the degree of incitement, and the forces that incite. Sudan is a dictatorship, facing flak for its genocidal warfare in Darfur. A demonstration on some other topic catches the eye of ADD-afflicted media quite nicely. Elsewhere the rent-a-mobs are hired by clerics in power (Iran), clerics playing for power (Pakistan), or clerics flush with Saudi money (everywhere). While we pray for the Islamic enlightenment, let us also work for a new energy choice, and behavior modification in half a dozen wealthy despotisms.

■ The U.S. aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* planned to dock in Hong Kong November 21 to give the crew four days of Thanksgiving shore leave. The Chinese authorities, however, refused *Kitty Hawk* permission to dock, apparently out of pique at our government's decision to help Taiwan upgrade missile defenses, fortified perhaps by President Bush's public reception of the Dalai Lama in October. *Kitty Hawk* responded by returning to her base in Japan via the Taiwan Strait—international waters, but ones our carriers generally avoid in deference to Communist China's sensibilities. The Communists blustered their "grave concern." The grave concern in Washington is that we do not know whether China's political leadership is fully controlling the actions of China's military, as with the test of an anti-satellite weapon back in January. Let us never forget that, *Wirtschaftswunder* notwithstanding, China is not a stable nation under rational government. Firm assertions of international law and civilized norms, such as free passage through the Taiwan Strait, need making. We were right to make this one.

Editor's Note: The next issue of National Review will appear on Jan. 10.

■ Mark Steyn, ornament of our pages and many others, may be muzzled by an authoritarian state: Canada. The Canadian Islamic Conference filed complaints before the Human Rights Commissions of British Columbia, Ontario, and Canada itself, protesting an excerpt from Steyn's book *America Alone*, which ran in *Maclean's* magazine in October 2006. *Maclean's* is a pillar of Canada's MSM; *America Alone* made it to every Canadian bestseller list. But when the magazine refused to run an unedited five-page rebuttal by Muslim law students, the CIC struck, calling Steyn "flagrantly Islamophobic." Steyn had the best riposte: If the CIC dislikes his argument, "argue against it but don't try to criminalize debate. That's the way they do things in Sudan and Saudi Arabia, not Canada." But that may be the way they do things in Canada, whose confrontation-averse culture and rights-averse political system is gamed by aggressive minorities and political activists. Stay here, Mark; America will offer haven to resisters in the war on free speech.



■ Four and a half months after being hit with allegations that one of its contributors, a soldier serving in Iraq, had been serving up fiction disguised as fact, *The New Republic* finally published a 7,000-word nostra culpa in which editor Franklin Foer concluded, "We cannot stand by these stories." Along the way, Foer took shots at the reporters and bloggers who hounded him into apologizing, as if it were their fault he got the magazine into this mess by not properly vetting the soldier's stories. (Foer also admitted that the fact-checker assigned to one story was the soldier's wife.) From the beginning, *The New Republic* handled this episode by stonewalling and blaming the messenger, and its final say on the matter was long-winded and full of excuses. A simple "Our apologies" would have gone a lot further.

■ W. Thomas Smith Jr., a former contributor to National Review Online, did not make his stories up. But after a thorough investigation, NRO concluded that some of his reporting from Lebanon in September and October was unreliable. After being unable to independently verify several of his blog reports, NRO editor Kathryn Jean Lopez apologized for failing to vet the stories properly. NRO has taken steps to ensure that this doesn't happen again.

■ Imus came back on the radio, after penance for his racial offenses. There to greet him were Sens. John McCain and Chris Dodd, both candidates for president ("Welcome back, old friend," McCain said). Imus assured his audience that "not much has changed. Dick Cheney is still a war criminal, Hillary Clinton is still Satan." So we ask the senators: Do they believe that Dick Cheney is a war criminal, and that Hillary Clinton is Satan? If they believe the former, why haven't they taken action? If they believe the latter, isn't that a bigger story than Romney's Mormonism? Perhaps they believe neither, but excuse Imus on the grounds that he is an entertainer. Strippers

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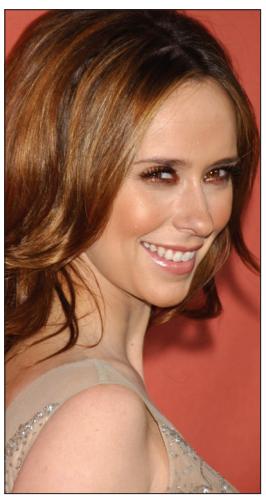
The Week...

are also entertainers; so are men who bite off chicken heads in carnivals. Would McCain and Dodd appear alongside them? Everyone bleats about the tone of politics, but maybe some politicians will have to risk losing some exposure to change it.

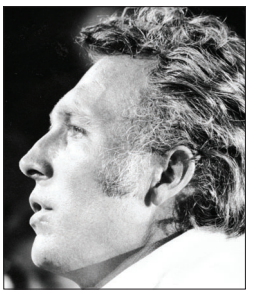
■ Allentown, Pa., in the heart of the old steel country, boasts a minor-league baseball team, the Lehigh Valley IronPigs. The team is affiliated with the Philadelphia Phillies, and its name comes from the old method of cooling iron in short parallel troughs, resembling piglets feeding. A baseball team needs a mascot, of course, and the mascot needs a name. The IronPigs naturally enough chose a furry pig as their mascot. After running a naming competition among fans, they chose the name PorkChop. This set off political-correctness alarms all over the Keystone State. Apparently—who knew?—"pork chop" is a derogatory term for persons from south of the border. So, at any rate, said some local Hispanics, who registered complaints. The IronPigs promptly changed their mascot's name to Ferrous. As the team's general manager observed, in a pause between bouts of scourging himself with both whips and scorpions: "If it offended a few, it's a few too many." Of course it is. But now, this new name, Ferrous: With some very slight modification of the vowels, does it not sound insulting to the differently-oriented? One can never be too careful in today's America.



■ Actress Jennifer Love Hewitt hit back at Internet harpies who mocked photos of her on a Hawaiian beach that allegedly showed her to be fat. "A size 2 is not fat!" she replied. "To all girls with butts, boobs, hips, and a waist, put on a bikini—put it on and stay strong." Contemporary beauty norms for starlets and celebrities are demented: anti-flesh, anti-feminine, anti-life. Miss Hewitt was quite right to condemn them, and she may come by NR's offices to revise and extend her remarks any time she likes.

■ As our colleague The Straggler notes elsewhere in this issue, some products of human ingenuity—slide rules, suspender belts—have been made utterly obsolete by new technology. This seems to be happening to the pay phone. According to the FCC, the number of pay phones in the United States fell from about 2.1 million in 1997 to about 1 million in 2005. Now AT&T has announced it will quit the pay-phone business next year. Small independent operators—there are about a thousand of them nationwide—will take up the slack, but it is clear the pay phone is headed for extinction, routed by the now-ubiquitous cellphone. The first pay phone showed up in 1878. Eleven years later the first coin-operated pay phone was installed in Hartford, Conn. (The earlier ones had had attendants.) All through the 20th century, pay phones were a feature of everyday life in America. Now they are vanishing. Where now will Clark Kent change his costume?

■ One of NR's editors says he first learned the words *evel knievel* as a common noun: He didn't know who Evel Knievel was, but to be an evel (or, as he heard it, "evil") knievel was to win praise for doing what was dangerous, probably forbidden, and cool. That pretty well sums up Knievel's career. Most will remember him for his jumps across deadly animals, parked cars, Greyhound buses, and other obstacles—usually on a motorcycle, sometimes on a rocket, as when he failed spectacularly to clear the Snake River Canyon in 1974. Along the way, Knievel also worked as a miner, served in the Army, played professional ice hockey, competed in rodeos and ski-jumping contests, ran a hunting-guide service, got shut down for poaching in Yellowstone, married twice, and had a son, who grew up to become—a professional daredevil. Knievel broke some 40 bones in his life, but survived long enough to convert to Christianity in his 69th and final year. The modern world allows few men to win fame for physical courage; their ranks are now diminished by one. R.I.P.



2008

Romney for President

Many conservatives are finding it difficult to pick a presidential candidate. Each of the men running for the Republican nomination has strengths, and none has everything—all the traits, all the positions—we are looking for. Equally conservative analysts can reach, and have reached, different judgments in this matter. There are fine conservatives supporting each of these Republicans.

Our guiding principle has always been to select the most conservative viable candidate. In our judgment, that candidate is Mitt Romney, the former governor of Massachusetts. Unlike some other candidates in the race, Romney is a full-spectrum conservative: a supporter of free-market economics and limited government, moral causes such as the right to life and the preservation of marriage, and a foreign policy based on the national interest. While he has not talked much about the importance of resisting ethnic balkanization—none of the major candidates has—he supports enforcing the immigration laws and opposes amnesty. Those are important steps in the right direction.

Uniting the conservative coalition is not enough to win a presidential election, but it is a prerequisite for building on that coalition. Rudolph Giuliani did extraordinary work as mayor of New York and was inspirational on 9/11. But he and Mike Huckabee would pull apart the coalition from opposite ends: Giuliani alienating the social conservatives, and Huckabee the economic (and foreign-policy) conservatives. A Republican party that abandoned either limited government or moral stan-

HEWITT: DAVE EDWARDS/MAXPPP KNIEVEL: ZUMA

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dards would be much diminished in the service it could give the country.

Two other major candidates would be able to keep the coalition together, but have drawbacks of their own. John McCain is not as conservative as Romney. He sponsored and still champions a campaign-finance law that impinged on fundamental rights of political speech; he voted against the Bush tax cuts; he supported this year's amnesty bill, although he now says he understands the need to control the border before doing anything else.

Despite all that and more, he is a hero with a record that is far more good than bad. He has been a strong and farsighted supporter of the Iraq War, and, in a trying political season for him, he has preserved and even enhanced his reputation for dignity and seriousness. There would be worse nominees for the GOP (see above). But McCain ran an ineffectual campaign for most of the year and is still paying for it.

At a time when voters yearn for competence and have soured on Washington because too often the Bush administration has not demonstrated it, Romney offers proven executive skill.

Fred Thompson is as conservative as Romney, and has distinguished himself with serious proposals on Social Security, immigration, and defense. But Thompson has never run any large enterprise—and he has not run his campaign well, either. Conservatives were excited this spring to hear that he might enter the race, but have been disappointed by the reality. He has been fading in crucial early states. He has not yet passed the threshold test of establishing for voters that he truly wants to be president.

Romney is an intelligent, articulate, and accomplished former businessman and governor. At a time when voters yearn for competence and have soured on Washington because too often the Bush administration has not demonstrated it, Romney offers proven executive skill. He has demonstrated it in everything he has done in his professional life, and his tightly organized, disciplined campaign is no exception. He himself has shown impressive focus and energy.

It is true that he has less foreign-policy experience than Thompson and (especially) McCain, but he has more executive experience than both. Since almost all of the candidates have the same foreign-policy principles, what matters most is which candidate has the skills to execute that vision.

Like any Republican, he would have an uphill climb next fall. But he would be able to offer a persuasive outsider's critique of Washington. His conservative accomplishments as governor showed that he can work with, and resist, a Democratic legislature. He knows that not every feature of the health-care plan he enacted in Massachusetts should be replicated nationally, but he can also speak with more authority than any of the other Republican candidates about this pressing issue. He would also have credibility on the economy, given his success as a businessman and a manager of the Olympics.

Some conservatives question his sincerity. It is true that he has reversed some of his positions. But we should be careful not to overstate how much he has changed. In 1994, when he tried to unseat Ted Kennedy, he ran against higher taxes and government-run health care, and for school choice, a balanced budget amendment, welfare reform, and "tougher measures to stop illegal immigration." He was no Rockefeller Republican even then.

We believe that Romney is a natural ally of social conservatives. He speaks often about the toll of fatherlessness in this country. He may not have thought deeply about the political dimensions of social issues until, as governor, he was confronted with the cutting edge of social liberalism. No other Republican governor had to deal with both human cloning and court-imposed same-sex marriage. He was on the right side of both issues, and those battles seem to have made him see the stakes of a broad range of public-policy issues more clearly. He will work to put abortion on a path to extinction. Whatever the process by which he got where he is on marriage, judges, and life, we're glad he is now on our side—and we trust him to stay there.

He still has some convincing to do with other conservatives. Romney has been plagued by the sense that his is a passionless, paint-by-the-numbers conservatism. If he is to win the nomination, he will have to show more of the kind of emotion and resolve he demonstrated in his College Station "Faith in America" speech.

For some people, Romney's Mormonism is still a barrier. But we are not electing a pastor. The notion that he will somehow be controlled by Salt Lake City or engaged in evangelism for his church is outlandish. He deserves to be judged on his considerable merits as a potential president. As he argued in his College Station speech, his faith informs his values, which he has demonstrated in both the private and public sectors. In none of these cases have any specific doctrines of his church affected the quality of his leadership. Romney is an exemplary family man and a patriot whose character matches the high office to which he aspires.

More than the other primary candidates, Romney has President Bush's virtues and avoids his flaws. His moral positions, and his instincts on taxes and foreign policy, are the same. But he is less inclined to federal activism, less tolerant of overspending, better able to defend conservative positions in debate, and more likely to demand performance from his subordinates. A winning combination, by our lights. In this most fluid and unpredictable Republican field, we vote for Mitt Romney.

OBITUARY

Henry Hyde, R.I.P.

THE National Right to Life Committee has estimated that more than 1 million Americans are alive today because of the Hyde Amendment. That's like saying that more than a million Americans are alive today because of Henry Hyde.

The former Republican congressman's own life came to an end on November 29, at the age of 83. He lived long enough to learn, a month before he died, that President Bush had awarded him a Medal of Freedom—a well-deserved capstone to a productive career as one of conservatism's great legislators.

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Hyde spent 32 years in the House of Representatives, retiring only last year. He made his mark in many areas: as a tough-minded chairman of the Committee on International Relations, as the head prosecutor in the Clinton impeachment case, and as one of the GOP's most persuasive debaters.

He will be most remembered for the Hyde Amendment. First passed in 1976, when the Chicago native was new to Washington, it bans the federal funding of abortions though Medicaid. The year before it became law, the federal government had financed 300,000 abortions for low-income women. Afterward, this number dropped essentially to zero.

Despite his right-of-center politics (he is one of just a few congressmen to have their own entries in *American Conservatism: An Encyclopedia*), Hyde was popular among both Republicans and Democrats. They understood him as a man of good cheer and firm principle, even when they disagreed with him—as liberals did on many issues, and as some conservatives did when Hyde argued passionately against congressional term limits or supported gun-control measures.

His reputation withstood a severe test during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, when Hyde led the House in impeaching Bill Clinton but failed to convince the Senate to remove him from office. He was attacked repeatedly and often ruthlessly. Yet his determination to press the case helped lead to meaningful punishment for Clinton (the disgrace of impeachment).

During the height of the impeachment controversy, Rep. Maxine Waters, a left-wing Democrat, tried to scold Hyde. "History will not be kind to you," she glowered. She was wrong. History will remember Henry Hyde for precisely what he was: one of the great congressmen of his generation—or any.

APPRECIATION

Last Verse

A good many years ago, a very young, very low-ranking IBM scribe came across his first copy of National Review and he liked it, liked it a lot. At the time *The Reporter* magazine ran light verse in every issue and William H. von Dreele set his goal on selling his verse to NR.

It wasn't easy. It was almost a year from the time that he sent in his first lighthearted putdown of whatever was the liberal *cause de l'instant* to the time that NR printed his first verse. But the reaction of its readers was so immediate and so vociferous that within a month two or three Bill von Dreele poems were appearing in each issue.

Von Dreele's critical antennae were finely tuned to liberal sensibilities. As Willmoore Kendall once remarked about a colleague's wife (who shall be nameless), "When there is an intellectual breeze in the air, the lady rustles." And so it was with Bill von Dreele when there was a quiver anywhere in the cosmos that affronted liberal sensitivities. He was the boy to dissect it with knife, scalpel, and, in extreme cases, iambic pentameter.

One memorable von Dreele epitomized liberal shock at a Reagan uptick in polls before the approaching Carter–Reagan November elections. It was just one of many.

Like a giant organ swelling
Over something from Gounod
Like a saturating shelling . . .
Like a real nor'easter blow
Like a Grecian peroration
Like a deluge from above
Like a stripper's slow gyration
Tearing off a leather glove
Watch 'em shudder! Hear 'em bellow!
As the liberals detect
Ronald Reagan is the fellow
All us honkies may elect.

Bill von Dreele was drafted into the Army shortly after entering Middlebury College, age 18. He served as a scout, a hazardous occupation even for an infantryman, with the 78th Infantry, which was the outfit that found the retreating Germans had failed to destroy the Remagen bridge, the last standing bridge over the Rhine, and held it until advance units of the 7th Army could secure the crossing. He returned to Middlebury after the war, earned a master's at NYU, and then went to work for IBM as a writer of in-office publications for what he describes as 25 dreary years. What gave him the fillip he craved during those years was his association with NR.

He did everything for the magazine, and for its editors. When Bill Buckley ran for mayor of New York in 1965, Bill von Dreele edited an eight-page insert that went to city readers. When Buckley asked von Dreele to pen new verses for a performance of Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals* (Buckley didn't like the verses Ogden Nash had provided), von Dreele did so, producing the new set in 48 hours, in time for Buckley's rendition. He wrote verses for holidays, for special issues, for political conventions, for birthday parties. For a number of years he appeared weekly in the *New York Observer*, and the weekly *Litchfield* (Connecticut) *County Times*. A half-dozen years ago his alma mater, Middlebury, recognized his accomplishments at commencement ceremonies by bestowing an honorary doctorate on him.

The minute Bill von Dreele completed his 25 years at IBM, he gave notice. By this time he was doubly unhappy because IBM had moved its headquarters to White Plains, where cafeteria lunches had none of the charm of the small midtown Manhattan restaurants he and his chums had patronized.

His amused and affectionate IBM friends sent a limousine to pick him up at his apartment on West 84th Street on his last day of servitude, drive him to work in White Plains, then to a celebratory lunch, and finally home again. The uniformed limousine chauffeur was instructed, as he let Bill out at the door, to doff his cap, bow, and say: "Happy retirement, Mr. von Dreele."

Now it is the time for NR's readers to add their farewells to NR's poet laureate who, nearly 44 years since his first appearance in our blue-bordered oasis of sanity, is, at age 83, putting down his pen. Goodbye, good friend. And *bon appétit!*

—PRISCILLA BUCKLEY

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■ 2008 ■

The Horror of Huck

We have seen this act in the Republican party before—recently

JONAH GOLDBERG

One of my favorite movie scenes is from *Jaws 2*, when Roy Scheider (an underrated actor) is trying to convince the town council that he's spotted yet another shark lurking off the waters of Amity. "But I'm telling you, and I'm telling everybody at this table, that that's a shark. And I know what a shark looks like, because I've seen one up close. And you'd better do something about this one, because I don't intend to go through that hell again!"

If you're wondering why some of us have become so vexed by the sightings of Mike Huckabee's dorsal fin above the choppy waters of Iowa-caucus polling and even out in the high sea of national polls, poor Chief Brody's panic might help you understand. We've seen this before.

Now, some "Huckabashers" have an interest in slapping down Huckabee because he's a threat to their preferred candidates. But for many of us, Huckaphobia is sincere and disinterested. We feel a bit like Lloyd Bochner's assistant in that *Twilight Zone* episode "To Serve Man"—the one where Bochner walks into an interstellar stewpot while carrying an alien tome because he doesn't hear his assistant shouting, "It's a cookbook!" Now we're shouting, "It's a compassionate conservative!"—and wondering if voters will hear us in time.

I should probably capitalize those words, because I have no problem—nor can I imagine anyone who does—with a conservative's feeling compassion for the unfortunate, the injured, the infirm, the victimized, the lost puppies, and the birds with broken wings. No, I'm talking about big-"C" Compassionate Conservatism, which in some parts also goes by the name "heroic conservatism."

Let's backtrack. In 2000, George W. Bush ran as a "different kind of Republican." He was a *compassionate* conservative. The obvious implication was that those who disagreed with him were the sort to finish every debate on social policy by asking: "Why? Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?" (which, let the record show, are often good questions). Compassionate conservatism played well in Iowa, though that may simply have followed from the fact that Bush played well in Iowa.

The voters in New Hampshire, however, felt differently. As Rich Lowry noted at the time, Bush's compassionate-conservative rhetoric sounded Clintonian to the tougher conservatives of the Granite State. (Clinton himself commented in 1999 that "the rhetoric of compassionate conservatism . . . half those speeches sound like I gave them in '92. . . . It's very flattering.") "The toughest job in the world is to be a single mom," Bush proclaimed on the stump, to crowds stumped by what the policy implications of that observation might be. He promised he'd leave no child behind, a phrase employed relentlessly by Clintonites in the 1990s. McCain talked about beating Al Gore like a drum; George Bush promised to be a uniter, not a divider. New Hampshire voters united around the divider, giving McCain a 19-point victory margin. Bush responded in South Carolina by dropping the "I feel your pain" shtick and going on offense against McCain (to say the least). "New Hampshire," Lowry wrote in these pages in April 2000, "was compassionate conservatism's Waterloo."

Would that it had been so. Compassionate conservatism came back with a roar, or at least a very loud purr, in the general election. At the GOP convention, Bush and Rove hid the pale, male, shrink-the-government Huns from primetime and dressed the stage with a gorgeous mosaic of ethnic minorities. Bush insisted—as if lots of people disagreed—that family values do not end at the Rio Grande. But in his case, this justified trying to open the floodgates to even more Mexican immigrants.

Now my point isn't to pile on President Bush, so we can dispense with the usual litany of conservative complaints—overspending, amnesty, Marshall Plan talk after Katrina, and all the rest. Bush has hardly been all bad, and we can debate how great an influence compassionate conservatism has had on administration policy. But it's at least worth remembering that, whatever compassionate conservatism is, most conservatives don't like it, don't think it was worth sacrificing limited government for, and, most important, consider it the mindset that led to many of the biggest problems with the Bush administration. Working from the liberal assumption that the state can feel your pain ("When somebody hurts, government has got to move," Bush declared in 2003), the administration often found itself echoing liberals with me-too-

CHRIS KEANE/REUTERS

Mr. Goldberg, an NR contributing editor, is the author of the forthcoming *Liberal Fascism: The Secret History of the American Left from Mussolini to the Politics of Meaning.*

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You deserve a factual look at . . .

Jerusalem (1)

Whose city – whose "holy city" – is it?

It is forty years since Israel's victory in the Six-Day War in 1967 that the city of Jerusalem, which had been divided for nineteen years has been reunited under Israeli rule. But there is still much talk that the "Middle East problem" cannot be solved unless the city, or at the very least its eastern part, be "returned to its rightful owners," the Muslim Arabs. In fact, this claim for Jerusalem, together with the "return" of the 1948 refugees, whose descendants have miraculously swollen to 5 million, are posited as "non-negotiable demands" in discussions with the Arabs.

What are the facts?

A city of many nationalities. Before the end of the 1967 Six-Day War, during which the Israeli Defense Forces re-conquered Jerusalem from the Jordanians, claims to Jerusalem being a Muslim holy city were rarely, if ever, asserted. Jerusalem had always been a city in which many religions and nationalities lived side by side. It was only after the old city was back in Jewish hands that the Muslim Arabs declared their desire to wage "jihad" (holy war) to bring the city back into Arab possession.

The notion to call Jerusalem an Islamic holy city has only come about in modern times, especially after the Arabs lost the city to Israel in the Six-Day War. It now has gained currency by dint of constant repetition. The basis for the claim is that Jerusalem does indeed contain an Islamic holy site, namely the Temple Mount (sacred to both Muslims and Jews) with its two mosques, El Aksa and the Dome of the Rock. It is the place from which Mohammed, who had never set foot in the city, is believed to have ascended to heaven. But aware that it was the holy city of Christians and Jews, and wishing to convert them to his new religion, he commanded his followers to build a mosque in Jerusalem. But never in Muslim history did this mosque or this city compare in significance to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina – cities that no "infidel" may visit.

A tenuous Muslim claim. It is on the basis of this religious tradition that the Muslims designated the entire Jewish Temple Mount to be their holy site. The Israeli government, in its constant spirit of accommodation to Muslim sensibilities, has largely acceded to this tradition and has put the area in and around the two mosques entirely under Muslim control. But how would Christians feel if, instead of from the Temple Mount, Muslim tradition had Mohammed ascend from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and if the Muslim Arabs were to claim that site as their property? The Christian world, often ready to consent to Muslim claims against Jews and Israelis, would be greatly astonished and would certainly resist such claim. But Muslim Arab assertiveness doesn't end there. On the tenuous claim of their right to the Temple Mount, they have construed a claim to the entire city of Jerusalem (or at the very least to its eastern part), which they have declared to be their "third holiest city." And, it would be an insult to all Muslims and all Arabs to leave the city in the hands of the "infidel Jews."

> "Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning and of Jewish thinking for over 3,000 years. That is the reason that the State of Israel has rededicated the Jewish holy city to be its indivisible capital."

Jerusalem: Never an Arab capital. But the city of Jerusalem – in contrast to Baghdad, Cairo, and Damascus – has never played any major role in the political and religious lives of the Muslim Arabs. It was never a political center, never a national or even a provincial or sub-provincial capital of any country, since Biblical times. It was the site of one Muslim holy place, but otherwise a backwater to the Arabs. The passion for Jerusalem was not discovered by the Muslim Arabs until most recent history.

At the center of Jewish life. But Jerusalem has stood at the center of the Jewish people's national life since King David made it his capital in 1003 BCE. After the return from Babylonian exile, Jerusalem again served as the capital of the Jewish people for the next five-and-a-half centuries.

Jews are not the usurpers in Jerusalem. They have been living there since the Biblical era and have been the majority population since the 19th century. Jews have synagogues and other holy sites in most cities of the world. But do they claim sovereignty over those cities because of it? Of course not! It would be preposterous and people wouldn't accept it. And the Muslim Arab claim to Jerusalem, based on the mosques on the Temple Mount, is just as untenable. Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning and of Jewish thinking for over 3,000 years. That is the reason that the State of Israel has rededicated the Jewish holy city to be its indivisible capital.

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ism. The Iraq War and the Democrats' Bush hatred obscured this tendency, but it was there for those with eyes to see. We'd hoped compassionate conservatism was going to be the conservative alternative to Clintonism; instead it was the Republican version of it.

So why, why on earth, are so many conservatives rallying around Mike Huckabee? He not only promises to be a different kind of Republican and a different kind of conservative, but makes it plain that he thinks conservatives who disagree with him are grumps. "I'm a conservative, but I'm not angry at anybody," he says to the tittering glee of the liberal press, who love it when conservatives confirm their stereotypes. That government should do good wherever it can, whenever it can, is Huck's North Star. Whereas Bush defenders say that compassionate conservatism was mostly a marketing slogan that became more only when political necessity demanded it (the prescription-drug benefit, relentless genuflection to post-Katrina New Orleans, etc.), Huckabee's bleeding-heart conservatism informs Huckabee's worldview. He gave clemency to rapists and murderers because forgiveness is a sign of compassion. He banned public smoking in Arkansas because he is his brother's keeper, and he supports a national ban for the same reason. He imports the Golden Rule even into his foreign policy, believing that if we just do unto Iran, North Korea, and China as we would have them do unto us, everything will be fine. "You treat others the way you'd like to be treated. That's to me the fundamental issue that has to be reestablished in our dealings with other countries." This is breathlessly stupid.

The rap that Bush was unprepared or not intellectually nimble enough for the presidency may have been unfair, but it hits paydirt with Huckabee. It's not that he's dumb (Bush isn't either). Rather, he has a problem Bush didn't: He's a talker. Bush sticks to his catchphrases like a comic-book superhero's sidekick. Huckabee is a brilliant, gassy, Hurricane Hippo of a carnival-stall evangelist who can turn phrases on a dime. In Arkansas, he's considered an even greater maestro of off-the-cuff cornpone schmaltz than Bill Clinton.

This is the key insight into the House of Huckabee. He doesn't have a policy shop to speak of, nor has he betrayed much interest in having one. He doesn't do his homework (which is why he had to answer a query about the National Intelligence Estimate on Iran by dismissing it as a "gotcha question"). But he can always count on his speaking ability to get him out of a jam. That's one reason he's such an accomplished dissembler; he can make anything *sound* plausible. But on reflection and investigation, his answers don't hold up, contradict past statements, or plain old aren't true (see his statements about the release of Wayne DuMond, for example). This is the case with many politicians, of course. Clinton, a far more relentless truth-bender, suffered from the same kind of empathizing logorrhea, which forced him to keep talking until he said something the audience wanted to hear. Huckabee gives the impression that, beyond his sincere pro-life stance and a few other issues, he's willing to follow wherever his mouth takes him. He is a leaf on the wind of his own good intentions.

The proper objection to Huckabee has nothing to do with his religion. It is good and fine to have men of faith in politics. The problem is rather that Huckabee wants to switch the church pulpit for the bully pulpit—and there's little evidence he sees much of a difference. Churches are built from and for love. The government is not. It cannot love you and should not try. To believe that it can is to commit one of the gravest category errors in political thought. If you ask Huckabee whether he agrees with that, he might say yes, or he might say no. The point is it that it wouldn't matter, because his compass cannot be read in his words, but in his heart or his gut. That is not something we need more of.

When conservatives complain about the missteps of compassionate conservatism, I tell them, "We were warned." And we were. Bush said he would be different. He affirmed that he rejects Buckleyite conservatism for "strong-government" conservatism. One reason the primaries have been such an ideological feeding frenzy is that we are still recovering from the intellectual carnage such formulations caused. It's simply not obvious to people what a conservative is anymore. Huckabee's success is chumming up the water even more; you can almost hear that telltale *Jaws* theme music as he surges through the froth. And conservative voters had better do something about him, because I do not intend to go through all that again. **NR**

■ AT WAR

A National Disgrace

The recent National Intelligence Estimate is outrageously—possibly dangerously—misleading

JASON LEE STEORTS

THE latest National Intelligence Estimate on Iran is a disgrace. The release of its declassified "key findings" was, by all indications, meant to blow apart President Bush's Iran policy—and may well have succeeded. The substance of this NIE differs little from past assessments. Its only new piece of information proves that the mullahs have lied to us and makes them look more menacing than ever. But by employing a bit of semantic trickery, the NIE's authors guaranteed that every headline would be a variation on the theme: "U.S. Intelligence Report Says Iran Abandoned Nuclear Weapons Program in 2003."

Nothing could be farther from the truth, as proliferation experts of varying political stripes have recognized. But for the public, as well as for much of the "international community," the NIE caused a seismic shift in the Iran debate. Attempts to impose new sanctions are likely to crumble: China has already told our diplomats that the NIE changes everything, and Russia won't be far behind. A bombing campaign against the nuclear sites is out of the question. The Bush administration's efforts to keep the bomb from Iran are in critical condition.

To understand what went wrong—and to grasp the extent of the NIE authors' audacity—it's necessary to review the history of Iran's nuclear program, as well as what American intelligence services have said about it.

In 2002, the world learned that Iran was conducting activities intended for the production of nuclear power, the manufacture of nuclear weapons, or both. The biggest hurdle in either task is securing enough fissile material—the nuclear fuel that can power a reactor or make a warhead ex-

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plode. Iran's freshly revealed programs were devoted to making both plutonium and highly enriched uranium, the two main types of fissile material. Because Iran hadn't declared its activities to the International Atomic Energy Agency, it was in violation of its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Iran subsequently admitted that it was seeking both uranium and plutonium. But it claimed these efforts were part of a peaceful nuclear-power program. From the beginning that claim sounded absurd. Iran is among the world's top five exporters of petroleum and natural gas, from which it can make electricity more cheaply than in a nuclear reactor. We know it has tried to buy equipment used in nuclear tests; machines capable of shaping uranium or plutonium into the forms used in warheads; high-voltage switches of a type used to detonate nuclear weapons; and deuterium gas, which boosts the yield of atomic bombs. And it guards its declared nuclear facilities—the ones supposedly for civilian use—with a lavishly expensive air-defense system appropriate only to strategic military targets.

No surprise then that a 2005 NIE judged "with high confidence" that Iran was "determined to develop nuclear weapons." At no point, however, did the intelligence community say that Iran was running a program *specifically* devoted to the weaponization of fissile material and the manufacture of warheads. In fact, such a program wouldn't have made sense from the Iranian perspective. The regime would surely have reasoned as follows: "We can design warheads and secretly divert uranium to our military facilities now. But if we're discovered, the world will know we're lying about the purpose of our nuclear program. Bush is probably willing to fight a war over this. Would it not be wiser to master the production of fissile material first, under the guise of our 'civilian' program, and to undertake the much easier task of weaponizing it once conditions are more favorable?"

Now let's return to the latest NIE—and to its semantic trickery. This came in a footnote, which reads in full: "For the purposes of this Estimate, by 'nuclear weapons program' we mean Iran's nuclear weapon design and weaponization work and covert uranium conversion-related and uranium enrichment-related work; we do not mean Iran's declared civil work related to uranium conversion and enrichment." In other words, the authors simply accepted Iran's assertion that its declared facilities—the ones that can produce fuel for warheads, and would constitute the most crucial element of an eventual bomb-making operation—are for civilian use.

The sole piece of new information in this NIE is that Iran once *did* have a weaponization program in the precise sense of the footnote—something that the Iranian government has always denied. The NIE offers this judgment with "high confidence." It also judges with high confidence that Iran halted its explicit weaponization efforts in the fall of 2003 (though it has only "moderate confidence" that they were not subsequently restarted).

Step back for a moment and look at the big picture. If you were a policymaker, what would this NIE make you think? You've just found out that the Iranian government, which has no need for nuclear power but is hell-bent on amassing fissile material, operated a secret weaponization program as recently as four years ago and lied about it. Does this revelation make you feel better or worse about Iranian intentions? If the "moderate" government of Mohammad Khatami was deceiving you in 2003, are you more likely or less likely to trust Mahmoud Ahmadinejad now?

ROMAN GENN

Plenty of Americans will never even ask these questions, because they think the NIE said Iran isn't seeking nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, what the public always understood as constituting Iran's nuclear-weapons program continues and expands: Work on a heavy-water reactor that can produce plutonium goes forward at Arak, and Iran plans to boost its uranium-enrichment operation at Natanz from 3,000 centrifuges to more than 50,000.

The authors brazenly pass off their policy preferences as intelligence judgments—and the judgments are not intelligent. Consider their "high confidence" assessment that Iran's decision to halt the weaponization program "was directed primarily in response to increasing international scrutiny and pressure resulting from exposure of Iran's previously undeclared nuclear work." Assessing a regime's psychology is the essence of statecraft; it is not the province of those charged with reporting facts to policymakers. Speaking of facts, there was no "international pressure" on Iran in 2003. The IAEA hadn't referred Iran's nuclear activities to the Security Council, and the U.S. was still twiddling its thumbs while the EU-3 begged the mullahs to be nice. What *did* happen in 2003 was the American toppling of Saddam Hussein for his apparent pursuit of WMD. Is it not rational that Tehran, viewing such resolve, would suspend its weaponization program while moving ahead on "civilian" enrichment work?

"The reports' authors," I have written until now, but they have names, and those names shed light on the biases that shaped this NIE. Several former and current U.S. government officials, all of whom asked not to be named, have confirmed that the report's principal authors were Vann Van Diepen, Kenneth Brill, and Thomas Fingar. All three work in the directorate of national intelligence, and all three were formerly at the State Department, where they

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earned reputations for opposing sanctions efforts against rogue states.

One source says that Van Diepen "was the person at State who did everything not to sanction states involved in WMD transfers." A second says Van Diepen "always insisted that Iran had a right to 'peaceful' nuclear power even if it was violating the NPT." A third says Van Diepen "has an axe to grind with those who think more pressure should be brought to bear on proliferators."

As for Brill, the third source says that he "resisted instructions to put pressure on the IAEA to turn up the pressure on Iran," and that the way in which he carried out instructions (or refused to do so) was "outright insubordinate." The second source says that "even [Colin] Powell and [Richard] Armitage agreed he should not get another appointment after his dismal performance on Iran at the IAEA in 2002–2004." The first source confirms this.

Fingar was, according to a fourth source, "more of a benign figure," although all three men "constantly opposed the policies of the first [George W.] Bush administration." The second source calls Fingar "a careerist" who "has never deviated from what his subordinates told him in his entire life."

The fourth source also emphasizes that "none of them are professional intelligence officers. . . . I see in this NIE a lot of words and arguments that I saw in the first term—argued from a policy perspective back then. Now I see the same words and it's, quote, an intelligence judgment? I probably would have been skeptical just knowing it came from them."

National Review sought interviews with all three authors through the directorate of national intelligence. The request was denied, although Donald Kerr, number two at the directorate, released a statement saying, "We feel confident in our analytic tradecraft and resulting analysis in this estimate." He did not say why.

It's hard to imagine what he could have said. Every day, Iran comes closer to mastering the technologies of atomic slaughter. And because of the NIE, the only real hope of stopping it—a tightening of sanctions and a credible threat of force—may have closed forever. Let us thank Vann Van Diepen, Ken Brill, and Tom Fingar for this service to mankind. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH**

The Gospel Truth?

Questions about that Judas manuscript

JOHN J. MILLER

Last year on Palm Sunday, the National Geographic Society presented a two-hour television special called *The Gospel of Judas*. It told the incredible story of an ancient document, from its mysterious discovery in the sands of Egypt to its strange life on the underground antiquities market to its secret restoration in modern labs. Even more amazing was what the fragile papyrus seemed to say about Christ's betrayer. He wasn't the world's worst bad guy, but actually a heroic figure who has received history's biggest bum rap. Everything you think you know about Judas is wrong: The manuscript, according to the narrator of the television show, "tells a different story, one that could challenge our deepest beliefs." It was like a preposterous subplot from *The Da Vinci Code*, the controversial novel by Dan Brown—except that the Gospel of Judas was an authentic text from the earliest days of Christianity.

Biblical scholar April D. DeConick watched the program on the night it aired. "I was excited to think that a lost gospel had been found," she says. When it was over, she printed out a version from the National Geographic website. "As I read it over, the pit of my stomach started to contract. I thought to myself, 'something's not right here.'" When she came across what she considered to be a blunder in the translation, she knew she was on to something. "I just about fell out of my chair," she says. It turns out that the Gospel of Judas, which caused such a stir upon its release, may indeed tell a different story—one that challenges the way National Geographic has chosen to portray it.

It isn't often that a codex almost as old as the Dead Sea Scrolls comes to light. In the case of the Gospel of Judas, scholars knew it had existed as early as the 2nd century because St. Irenaeus had written about it (and condemned it). None had seen it and many assumed that it would remain missing forever. Details are murky, but apparently in 1978 a tomb raider found the manuscript in an Egyptian cave. He sold it to an antiquities dealer. From there, it was stolen, reacquired, and finally stashed in a safe-deposit box at a bank in Hicksville, N.Y., where it stayed for 16 years. It eventually came into the possession of the Swiss-based Maecenas Foundation, which partnered with National Geographic to preserve and promote the old manuscript.

The preservation was painstaking because the codex had disintegrated into nearly 1,000 separate fragments. "The manuscript was so brittle, it would crumble at the slightest touch," said Rodolphe Kasser, one of the translators. The conservators nevertheless reassembled the document, which is now 85 percent complete. People involved with the project signed non-disclosure agreements so that when National Geographic at last unveiled the Gospel of Judas, shortly before Easter, it would make a big impact. That's precisely what happened: National Geographic put it on the cover of its magazine and held an exhibition at its headquarters in Washington, D.C. The story made headlines around the globe, the television show attracted 2 million viewers, and a pair of books zoomed onto the bestseller charts.

The first of these books, *The Lost Gospel* by Herbert Krosney, told of the text's "bizarre cloak-and-dagger journey." National Geographic, its publisher, says that 350,000 copies are in print. The second, *The Gospel of Judas*, whose centerpiece is a translation of the Coptic-language original, also flew off the shelves, with 250,000 copies currently in print.

It's the translation that April DeConick found wanting. At one point in the Coptic text, Jesus refers to Judas as a "daimon." National Geographic's translators—Kasser, plus Marvin Meyer and Gregor Wurst—render the word in English as "spirit." Yet this is a mistake, says DeConick: "The word means 'demon,' and that's the standard way of translating it." She identified other discrepancies as well, including a line in which Jesus tells of Judas's "ascent to the holy generation."

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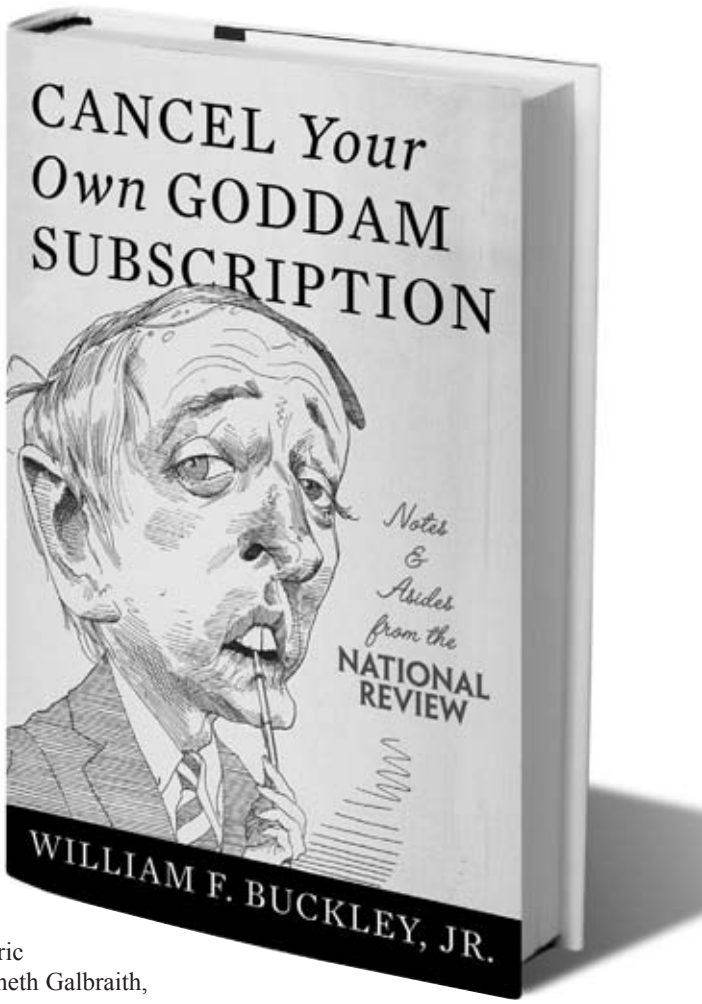

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To arrive at this, the translators actually altered the original Coptic text, eliminating a negative from the passage. In doing so, they reversed its meaning. Jesus really says that Judas "will not ascend to the holy generation."

The problem wasn't incompetence. Kasser, Meyer, and Wurst are in fact highly regarded academics in their obscure field. The number of people who are proficient in Coptic—an Egyptian language written with Greek letters—is tiny. Yet DeConick thinks she knows what went wrong: "They were trying to translate the text while it was still coming together, which worked against seeing the text as it really is, in its entirety." They also wound up with a provocative interpretation that turns a key part of the traditional Christian story on its head. Coincidentally, this was just a few weeks before the movie version of *The Da Vinci Code* reached theaters. "That was great for selling the book," observes DeConick. National Geographic's television show certainly played to the conspiracy-theory crowd when it noted, ominously, that the Gospel of Judas was "a document some might wish had remained buried forever." It never got around to saying exactly who these people might be, but Mario Roberty, head of the Maecenas Foundation, pointed a finger at the all-purpose bogeymen who live in the Vatican.

DeConick just wanted to take an honest look at what the Gospel of Judas says. In the months following its release, she worked on her own translation, setting it aside only to move from Illinois Wesleyan to Rice University, where she is now a professor. By August, she was just about done and getting ready to present her views at a conference in France—but she was also growing nervous. "I was completely against what they were claiming," she says of the Kasser-Meyer-Wurst translation. So she e-mailed a colleague, John Turner at the University of Nebraska, and asked for his input. "I thought she was right on target," says Turner, "and that's what I told her."

She wasn't alone. Independently, Louis Painchaud of Laval University in Quebec was reaching similar conclusions about the Gospel of Judas. So was Craig Evans of Acadia Divinity College in Nova Scotia—and he was actually on a National Geographic advisory board. He hadn't been charged with translating the codex, but with examining the Kasser-Meyer-Wurst translation and trying to determine its significance. "In hindsight, I should have looked at the text," he says. "Some of these errors are serious errors."

By the end of 2006, DeConick was completely convinced and decided to write a book: *The Thirteenth Apostle: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*, which came out in October. "The public was misled and it needs to be made aware of the fact that Judas is no hero in this gospel," she says. DeConick finished her own translation of the original Coptic text and kept up with a brand-new cottage industry of rapid-response books about the Gospel of Judas—books such as *Reading Judas* by Elaine Pagels and Karen L. King, who committed many of the same errors as the National Geographic translators. For their part, Kasser, Meyer, and Wurst released a "critical edition" of their translation, which made a few adjustments to account for some of DeConick's criticisms, but not, in her view, nearly enough of them.

Fragment of the Gospel of Judas

"There are fundamental principles of interpretation upon which we disagree," says Meyer, who is a professor at Chapman University in California. "These critics are just a little group of people." Yet their ranks seem to be growing. Birger Pearson, a professor emeritus at the University of California–Santa Barbara, has joined them: "When something like the Gospel of Judas appears, enterprising scholars are tempted to rush into print with their own books, sometimes to their later embarrassment." Pearson agrees with just about every aspect of DeConick's analysis. On December 1, the *New York Times* published an op-ed by DeConick, providing her with a large, mainstream audience.

If academic opinion continues to shift in DeConick's direction, the rarefied world of early-Christian scholarship may want to examine its own practices, to determine how it bungled so badly. There's no denying that the experts who worked with National Geographic did a lot of things right: Their restoration efforts deserve a round of hosannas, as DeConick and others are quick to point out. Yet the culture of confidentiality that surrounded the Judas project also insulated National Geographic from contrary ideas and second opinions. It was a success mainly in the sense that it kept the old manuscript under wraps until the stars were aligned for what was essentially a commercial product launch.

The problem has lingered on, too. Although National Geographic has devoted enormous resources to the Gospel of Judas, it still hasn't released full-sized facsimiles of the actual text. Scholars like DeConick are forced to squint over a version that's only about half-size, making it difficult at times to distinguish between a flaw in the papyrus and a smudge of ink.

The good news is that National Geographic now says that high-resolution images of the original Gospel of Judas will appear on its website soon. For some irritated scholars, that's almost two years too late. For others, it could be an early Christmas gift. **NR**

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

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Continued from page 6

earlier 1983 biography. But Oshinsky made it quite clear that Moss was *not* a case of mistaken identity and chastised the Army for failing to follow up on information that Moss was a real security risk. Oshinsky first cited the same sentence uttered by Moss before McCarthy's committee that Evans cites in his book, when Moss inadvertently stated that she "didn't get this Communist paper anymore until after we had moved." Evans writes that "Mrs. Moss herself would give the game away in an unguarded moment." Oshinsky wrote that Moss admitted this "in her own testimony," a fact that "Democrats (and many students of the Moss case) completely overlooked." This is precisely the same case Evans now makes. Why does he continually attack Oshinsky's book, and try to make it appear that the truth about Moss is one of his major findings?

On the case of Major Irving Peress, Oshinsky challenged those who claimed that the case was a "trivial affair." In fact, he *supported* McCarthy's charge that the Army lacked a consistent policy for handling security cases and had no method for tracking them. He also noted that McCarthy accurately investigated other similar cases in the Army "although the press seemed not to notice." I concentrate on Oshinsky because Evans attacks him often in his book, and writes as if he alone has now revealed the truth. It is accurate to say that information used by Evans, unavailable years ago, makes the case stronger—but I am correct to argue that the case that Moss was a Communist is not new.

Finally, Evans denies that he supports McCarthy's most outrageous claims against General Marshall. How can anyone read Evans's own words and come to a different conclusion? He writes, for example, that although Marshall himself had no Red leanings like Lattimore, McCarthy's case was made "on the basis of the policies [Marshall] favored and their abysmal outcomes." He was therefore "not in the clear for the bad decisions with which he *was* connected—especially those involving China." And here, Marshall was "carrying out a line devised by others." Which others? The answer, of course: the pro-Communist China hands like John Carter Vincent and John S. Service. Marshall, he writes, "had . . . been well indoctrinated by forces opposing Chiang Kai-shek and congenial to Yenan." His mentor was none other than Vincent, "a close ally of Service and Soviet agent Lauchlin Currie." In other words, Marshall was part and parcel of the great conspiracy of which McCarthy spoke.

As I pointed out in my review, Evans makes a number of valid points about McCarthy's critics. Would that he had shown similar critical acumen about Senator McCarthy. I ask only that readers go to his book, then look at my review, and judge for themselves whether the arguments I made are fair. **NR**

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'Electable,' They Say

The myth of Giuliani as Hillary-slayer

RAMESH PONNURU

People who object to Rudolph Giuliani's nomination are, by now, used to hearing the inevitable retort: *But he can win*. Conservatives should swallow their concerns—about abortion, or guns, or immigration—because he is the Republicans' strongest candidate in a year when the odds are against them. Electability is his trump card.

The Giuliani campaign knows it. In October, it leaked a document purporting to show that, up against Giuliani, Hillary Clinton could count only Massachusetts and Vermont as safe states.

This campaign tactic is working. Even Republicans who don't support Giuliani now see him as the most electable candidate. Thirty-eight percent of Republicans view him as the strongest potential candidate for November 2008, compared with 11 percent for his nearest rival, Mitt Romney. (That's according to a *Los Angeles Times*/Bloomberg poll released in December.) Some of his supporters are behind him primarily because he would be such a strong candidate.

Those polls also show that some voters place electability behind other considerations in deciding whom to support. It's a classic principle-vs.-pragmatism debate. But it may be beside the point. Before moving forward from the premise that so many Republicans accept—that Giuliani would be a very strong candidate next year—we should ask: Is the premise true?

The case for Giuliani's strength as a general-election candidate has four components. First, his record as mayor of New York City would neutralize the Democratic accusation that Republicans are incompetent. Second, national polls show him to be highly competitive with Hillary Clinton. Third, state-by-state polls show that he would do well in swing states, and even put some usually Democratic states within Republicans' reach. Fourth, as Jason Zengerle put it in a recent story on the "pseudoscience of electability" for *New York* magazine, it is "widely assumed that his moderate views on abortion and guns would help him in a general election."

Some of these assumptions are valid. Giuliani's record as mayor was extremely impressive and would be a major asset to his campaign next year. He made a city that had been thought to be ungovernable function. But other assumptions are shaky, and Giuliani has weaknesses as a general-election candidate that have been insufficiently discussed.

Let's start with those national polls. They can be misleading. Michael Dukakis left the Democratic convention in 1988 17 points ahead of George H. W. Bush. He ended up losing the election 53–46 percent. The national polls don't even reliably tell us which Republican candidate would perform best. They underestimate how well Mitt Romney or Fred Thompson would do because they are not well-known nationally. John McCain is almost as well-known as Giuliani. In an average of recent polls compiled by RealClearPolitics.com, McCain runs slightly better than Giuliani against either Clinton or Obama.

Giuliani's strategy director, Brent Seaborn, thinks the state-by-state picture looks a lot better for his man. He outlined the campaign's theory in an online strategy memo.

> [I]f Rudy is the nominee, Democrats will be forced to spend money in California, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, New York and Washington—states that they have spent almost no money in over the last few election cycles. Hillary Clinton will be forced to advertise in New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago—the 3 most expensive media markets in the country, something Democrats haven't had to do in 20 years. This will effectively take Florida off of the Democrat's target map—making it a safe Republican state in 2008 if Mayor Giuliani is the nominee. If another Republican is the nominee, traditional blue states will be safe, meaning the Democrats can plow all their resources into Ohio and Florida.

The state polls reflect Giuliani's high name recognition, just as the national polls do. They don't show that Giuliani has any spe-

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cial edge. SurveyUSA has McCain and Giuliani performing equally well—which is to say, badly—in California and even in New York against Clinton. Angelenos will not be seeing many political ads next fall.

Giuliani does significantly worse than McCain in SurveyUSA polls from several actual swing states: Virginia, Ohio, New Mexico, Wisconsin, and Iowa. SurveyUSA doesn't have data on Pennsylvania, but Quinnipiac found McCain and Giuliani running even against Clinton. New Jersey is the only state where Giuliani is beating Clinton but McCain isn't. That's a point in his favor, but Giuliani's margin is tight and the state is still a long shot.

The theory that Giuliani would redraw the electoral map at all, let alone redraw it in Republicans' favor, is open to question. Neither 9/11 nor the war in Iraq redrew that map, after all. Only three states switched sides between 2000 and 2004. Even if Giuliani redrew the map successfully, however, it might not help Republican candidates for governor, senator, and representative, since such a victory would, by definition, come from people and places that do not normally vote Republican.

LOSING VOTES

Leaving the polls on the candidates aside, there are Giuliani's distinctive positions on issues. Giuliani's history on abortion and guns is not "moderate," as much of the press has it. In the past he favored licensing gun owners, suing gunmakers, and keeping partial-birth abortion legal. None of these are popular positions. Giuliani has very recently moved toward more moderate positions. He is silent about which restrictions on guns he still supports, and says that after September 11 he gained a new appreciation of the importance of self-defense. He has also come out for a ban on partial-birth abortion.

It is widely recognized that Giuliani poses a larger risk than any other potential nominee of stimulating a third-party candidacy that eats into the Republican vote. Much of the party's base dislikes John McCain, too, but none of their disagreements with him—over campaign-finance reform, global warming, or even immigration—is likely to serve, separately or together, as the basis of a serious third-party run. Giuliani's support for abortion could form the basis for a protest campaign.

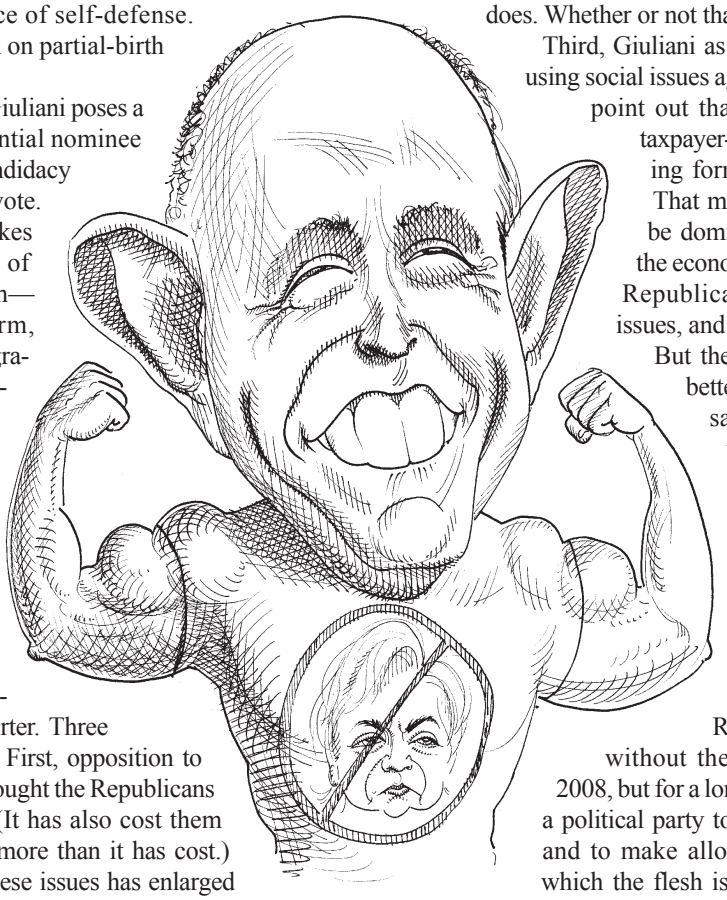
But the organizational barriers to mounting a third-party challenge are high, and it is not the biggest risk that comes with nominating a pro-choicer and gun-control supporter. Three other problems come to mind. First, opposition to abortion and gun control has brought the Republicans a lot of votes over the years. (It has also cost them some votes, but it has gained more than it has cost.) The party's conservatism on these issues has enlarged its base and attracted swing voters in places such as Wisconsin, Iowa, and Ohio. Some of these voters would pick the Democrats or stay home on Election Day if Giuliani were the nominee.

Some working-class social conservatives have been dragged reluctantly into voting Republican because of their moral concerns. They might conclude that a Giuliani nomination proved that they were right to fear that the Republican party is not serious about those concerns, in which case they might not come back to the party for many years.

Second, abortion intersects with religion in ways that could damage Giuliani. He is not only a pro-choicer, but a pro-choice Catholic. John Kerry was in this position in 2004. Bishops denounced his position, and some refused to let him receive communion. Kerry's dispute with his church contributed to the perception that he was inauthentic and vacillating: Was he a faithful Catholic or wasn't he? Giuliani will not fall into exactly the same trap. It seems unlikely that he will present himself for communion in the first place.

But Giuliani's indifference to the rites of his church creates another political difficulty. For the last 25 years, presidential elections have been won by the candidate who seems most at ease with religion and, indeed, the most religious. In 1984 and 1988, the Democrats ran candidates who were secular in outlook and lost. In 1992 and 1996, they ran a candidate who was more comfortable speaking in religious idioms than his Republican opponents, and won. In 2000, both candidates seemed equally religious, and tied. In 2004—well, you know the rest of the story. In 2008, those three leading Democrats would be able to present themselves as having a less complicated relationship with their faith than Giuliani does. Whether or not that should matter, it will.

Third, Giuliani as nominee will be disabled from using social issues against the Democrats. He cannot point out that Hillary Clinton's support of taxpayer-funded abortion is extreme, having formerly taken the same position. That means that the fall campaign will be dominated by the war on terrorism, the economy, and domestic-policy issues. Republicans can win on the first two issues, and can cut their losses on the third. But they will have to do significantly better on all three than they did in, say, 2004 to win, because they won't have the social issues on their side. And it seems highly unlikely that either national security or economic issues are going to help Republicans significantly more than they did back then.



ROMAN GENN

CHARACTER COUNTS

Republicans will also have to do without the character issue—not only in 2008, but for a long time to come. It is possible for a political party to maintain that character counts and to make allowances for the weaknesses to which the flesh is prone. But Giuliani's adultery

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was flagrant and his press-conference divorce was unprecedented. He offended propriety as well as morality. A party that nominated him with full knowledge of the seamier side of his history, and his lack of contrition over it, could not make character-based appeals with a straight face. (It would also owe some profuse apologies to Bill Clinton.)

In recent weeks, journalists have raised questions about whether taxpayer money was used to facilitate Giuliani's affair. His close connection to his former police commissioner Bernie Kerik—who was indicted in November for conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and tax fraud—has also come under scrutiny. (Giuliani vouched for Kerik when Bush briefly nominated him to run the Department of Homeland Security.) His lobbying firm has not released its client list.

It is entirely possible that Democrats have yet more dirt on Giuliani. If so, the fall campaign could be a long one. The issues of Clintonite corruption and do-we-want-Bill-back-in-the-White-House would be off the table. Worse, there is every reason to think that Republican voters would hold Giuliani's lapses against him more than Democrats would hold the Clintons' against her. And a steady drip-drip of allegations would make voters wonder whether they wanted to go through four years of scandal.

Add it all up, and it is hard to see Giuliani cleaning up, as Bush did, among the 22 percent of voters who in 2004 said that "values" had determined their votes. (They gave 80 percent of their votes to Bush.)

If Giuliani is the nominee, the Democrats will almost certainly be a more unified party. Giuliani has a shot at winning the Republican nomination because the Republicans have a larger field and the process is too compact to allow the traditional winnowing of that field. If he wins, he wins with a plurality of Republicans' votes rather than a majority. The Democrats will probably be able to generate a nominee who carries a majority. (You can already see glimmers of this possibility in the polling. Giuliani has not had the support of more than 30 percent of Republicans since May. Clinton has never fallen below 30 percent, and is now above 40.)

There will be more Republicans who will have voted in primaries against a victorious Giuliani than Democrats who voted against their nominee—and more of the Republicans will be inclined to ditch their party's nominee. In the last 25 years, no Republican has won the presidency without winning 91 percent or more of Republicans' votes.

Giuliani might be able to win many of the disaffected Republicans back. But he'll have to spend time doing so instead of reaching out to swing voters, which is the electability rationale of his candidacy.

Giuliani's combativeness could hurt him in a general election, too, in two ways. First, it could make voters nervous about his foreign policy. They may be persuaded that the country has to be willing to go to war on occasion, but they're not gung-ho for war. Second, he could look like a bully up against a female Democratic nominee. The Giuliani campaign understands this second problem, and Giuliani has been trying to keep a lid on it lately. But in the heat of a general-election campaign, the lid might pop open.

Giuliani could win the election. But he would have to overcome a lot of obstacles that his boosters would like to ignore. **NR**

■ THE NATION

Among Evangelicals, A Transformation

They're not 'cracking up,' as some contend, or hope; they are, however, changing

PETER WEHNER

THE modern evangelical movement was born 60 years ago. It was in 1947 that theologian Carl F. H. Henry's landmark book *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* was published. Henry rejected what he believed was the rigidity and cultural separatism of fundamentalism; in his words, "Fundamentalism is the modern priest and Levite, by-passing suffering humanity." It is the duty of Christians, Henry argued, to live out "the implications of [the] redemptive message."

From those tentative early steps, the evangelical movement has grown into the most important political force in America. Not surprisingly, it has gathered critics along the way. Liberals and secularists in particular view evangelicals with both disdain and fear. Evangelicals are seen as narrow-minded, anti-intellectual, and eager for a theocratic takeover. Among the fondest hopes of liberalism, then, is that the evangelical movement will experience a "crack-up" that will leave it impotent and disengaged from politics.

Those hopes are bound to be dashed. The evangelical movement is not experiencing a "crack-up." But it *is* undergoing a transformation—one that is far-reaching and will profoundly affect Christianity and American politics.

Evangelicalism, contrary to conventional wisdom, is broad, diverse, and difficult to define. It encompasses personalities ranging from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush, from James Dobson to Jim Wallis. It includes magazines like *World*, *Christianity Today*, and *Sojourners*; and organizations like Campus Crusade for Christ and International Justice Mission. For our purposes, evangelicals can be defined as those who profess to have undergone a "born again" experience and claim to have a personal relationship with Jesus, whom they believe to be the Messiah. Evangelicals believe the Hebrew Bible and New Testament have been given to us by God and therefore have authority over our lives. And they believe, too, that it is a privilege and obligation to witness their faith to others.

Evangelicalism also "encourages spiritual improvisation and individualism," according to D. Michael Lindsay, author of the new book *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite*. Evangelicals tend to be informal in their worship, individualistic, and far less inclined than Catholics to rely on church doctrine (as opposed to personal experience). There is, however, nothing within evangelicalism like the richness and texture of Catholic social thought.

Mr. Wehner, a former deputy assistant to President George W. Bush, is now a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

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Today the evangelical movement constitutes about one-third of the American electorate. More than 70 percent are white or Hispanic; about 28 percent are African-American.

In 1987, white evangelicals identified themselves with the Republican party more than the Democratic party by only five points. By 2004, the gap was 25 points, with 48 percent of white evangelicals identifying themselves as Republicans and only 23 percent as Democrats. That same year, almost 80 percent of America's 26.5 million white evangelicals voted for President Bush (just 14 percent of black Protestants voted for Bush). This accounted for fully one-third of Bush's total votes, making it his, and the GOP's, single most important voting bloc.

A POST–"RELIGIOUS RIGHT" ERA

Politically speaking, then, evangelicals can appear to be very much of one mind. But beneath the surface, currents of change are gathering speed. The most dramatic change we are seeing is generational, according to John C. Green of the Pew Forum. (Much of the data in this essay was gathered by the Pew Research Center.) Among people under 30, he said, the shift has the dimensions of a "sea-change."

This change does *not* involve a major shift away from a commitment to protect unborn children. For example, the younger generation of evangelicals remains strongly pro-life—more pro-life, in fact, than older evangelicals. According to a recent Pew poll, 70 percent of evangelicals age 18–29 favor making it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion compared with 55 percent of evangelicals 30 and above. On the other hand, younger evangelicals view homosexuality as more morally acceptable than do older evangelicals. According to preliminary studies by the Barna Group, 18–29-year-old born-again Christians are some 15 percent more likely to find homosexuality morally acceptable than their religious elders. Just under 80 percent of white evangelicals oppose gay marriage—though the intensity of the opposition has decreased over the years, and the percentage of young evangelicals opposing it is lower than that of older evangelicals.

Overall, more white evangelicals age 18–29 describe their political views as conservative (44 percent) than moderate (34) or liberal (15). Thus, while they are still considerably more conservative than young people as a whole, they are less conservative than evangelicals 30 and older.

Another characteristic of the younger evangelicals is that they are suspicious of big institutions and skeptical of big government. They believe we have an obligation to redress suffering and injustice—but they want to find means other than large, bureaucratic government programs to achieve those ends. Young evangelicals are also increasingly seeking ways to bridge denominational divides. "One of the clearest impressions I have received from [young evangelicals] is a great hesitation to be identified with any religious category," M. Craig Barnes, professor of leadership and ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, recently told me. Barnes, who often speaks at evangelical seminaries and colleges, says that today's young evangelicals "want desperately to cross lines that inevitably develop whenever a line is drawn around a grouping. They perceive the line as inherently wrong and have a distaste for all of them."

While the populist "blue-collar evangelicals"—those who belong to the more fundamentalist and Pentecostal wing of the movement—still identify with the Jerry Falwell–James Dobson model, recent years have brought a break with the tone and approach of the "Religious Right," particularly among upper-middle-class and more highly educated evangelicals. These evangelicals are seeking a "rejection of the hard-edged politics of the Christian Right," according to Green. Most evangelicals still care a great deal about advancing a culture-of-life agenda; abortion remains their most consistently important and galvanizing issue. Yet more and more evangelicals are showing concern for environmental issues like global warming; human-rights issues like religious persecution and genocide; and "social justice" issues like poverty and AIDS. The evangelical movement's longstanding concern about abortion isn't receding; the area of concern is enlarging. "Evangelicalism is in a time of major self-examination," John Yates, rector of The Falls Church (an Episcopal church in Falls Church, Va.), told me. "Certainly there is a sensitivity to be living out the social implications of the gospel that is much broader than even ten years ago."

The contemporary evangelical movement is increasingly identifying with voices like Tim Keller, the senior pastor at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, who is known for his persuasive, culturally informed, and literary sermons (he's been called "Manhattan's leading evangelist" in the *New York Times*), and Rick Warren, the senior pastor of Saddleback Church and author of the bestselling book *The Purpose Driven Life*. Warren and those like him tend to be low-key in their approach to politics, non-partisan, and willing to let people find their own way politically instead of instructing them how to vote.

THE ELECTORAL CONSEQUENCES

As one would expect, this transformation has important political implications. For one thing, despite his current low approval ratings, President Bush remains fairly popular among evangelicals and the Republican party remains the natural home for most of them. Forty percent of young white evangelicals identify themselves as Republicans, compared with just 19 percent who identify themselves as Democrats. To the extent that support for Republicans has tailed off since 2001—it's dropped 15 points since then—those people have increasingly identified themselves as independent, not as Democrats. (The disdain shown by Democrats and secularists for evangelicals over the years has been noticed by evangelicals.)

What is happening, then, is that evangelical voters remain solidly conservative and still lean Republican, but less reliably so. The feeling one gets is that many evangelicals are increasingly uncomfortable with a close association with political institutions. As a pastor of a church in California put it to me, "In my mind, to be co-opted by any political party is a problem. Whenever the gospel is overtly identified with a political party, we are in trouble."

Most evangelicals still believe politics is one way to improve the human condition, but they care more about the ideas and ideals that they believe ought to animate politics. "The Kingdom of God transcends politics," Scott Dudley, senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Bellevue, Wash., told me. "The Kingdom includes politics, but ultimately is bigger than politics and goes deeper and beyond where politics can go."

The perennial snare for Christians is to invest hopes in politics that cannot be met—which leads to disenchantment and eventually to bitterness.

What role, then, should we expect evangelical voters to play in

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the 2008 presidential elections? Much depends on who the nominees are. According to the latest data, the Iraq War is the single most important issue for evangelical voters, and all the top-tier Republican candidates are resisting the call to withdraw prematurely from Iraq. They have also adopted a strong stance on the war against jihadism, which many evangelicals view as a mortal threat akin to the one we faced during the Cold War.

Beyond that, however, the candidates begin to separate. The candidate who will face the greatest apprehension among evangelicals is Rudy Giuliani—whose stances on abortion and gay rights have engendered evangelical skepticism, as has his personal life. Meanwhile, evangelicals don't yet fully trust Mitt Romney because of his recent conversion on a number of social issues. His December 6 religion speech—arguing that denominationalism should not be a factor in presidential politics, while at the same time insisting that religious values should be—was extremely well received by evangelical leaders. Almost every evangelical I know agrees that Romney's Mormonism should not influence people's votes, yet there is a suspicion (backed by polling data) that it might.

The candidate with the most appeal to evangelicals is former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee. His surge in Iowa and beyond is evidence of this. Huckabee's appeal to evangelicals is not surprising; in many ways, he embodies the changes we are seeing. Huckabee is a forceful, long-time defender of unborn life and the traditional institution of marriage. He speaks about his Christian faith not in a detached manner, but as central to who he is. Yet his tone is consciously different from that of past evangelical leaders—and conspicuously different from some of his own past statements. (It was recently disclosed that in 1992 Huckabee wrote that homosexuality was an "aberrant, unnatural, and sinful lifestyle"—and called for AIDS patients to be isolated.)

"Real faith," Huckabee, the former Baptist pastor, now says, "should make us humble and mindful, not [of] the faults of others, but of our own. It should not make us more judgmental but rather less judgmental, as we see others living a life with the same frailty we acknowledge within ourselves."

Today Huckabee's tone is more redemptive than judgmental. He tells people of how as a pastor he provided a listening ear to 14-year-old girls who were pregnant and 17-year-old boys who believed they were gay and had yet to speak to their parents about it. Huckabee talks about the need to be a good steward of the earth. He says he will not close his eyes to poverty and hunger. He has expressed opposition to waterboarding. And, at a time when the GOP base is furious about illegal immigration, Huckabee has had sympathetic words for illegal immigrants. His stands have alienated many conservatives. They fault him for his record on trade, immigration, and taxes; they also worry about his posture on Iran, and about his role in the release of convicted rapist Wayne DuMond, who killed a woman after being let out of prison.

Yet Huckabee, an excellent debater and speaker, is clearly generating excitement among evangelicals. When Pat Robertson endorsed Rudy Giuliani, Huckabee told the *Washington Post*'s Michael Gerson: "There is a disconnect between past generational leaders in Christian conservatism and their own followers." Huckabee is tapping into that discontent. Whether he can sustain his momentum is an open question, given the fundraising disadvantages he faces and the withering spotlight that turns to every top-tier presidential candidate. But Huckabee's rise underscores the broader changes we are witnessing within evangelicalism.

Among the Democrats, Hillary Clinton generates far and away the deepest antipathy among evangelicals. Barack Obama is considerably more appealing to them: Though he is conventionally liberal on most issues—and that remains the acid test for most evangelical voters—Obama is fluent when speaking about the Bible. In terms of the evangelical vote, the best match-up for Republicans would pit Huckabee against Clinton, while the worst would pit Giuliani against Obama.

The GOP, if it hopes to retain the strong support of evangelicals over the long run, will have to remain steadfast on some matters and make adjustments on others. Most important, Republicans will need to remain staunch on the war against militant Islam and the culture-of-life issues, abortion above all. If there were a retreat on those fronts, evangelical support would dissipate, and maybe even collapse.

Even so, Republicans need to move beyond the "culture war" model that worked well in the past. The rhetoric of candidates needs to be principled but civil, inviting rather than aggressive, and radiate grace instead of invoking apocalyptic warnings. Also, it is no longer enough simply to voice support for a human-life amendment that has no realistic chance of passing. While it will still be important for Republican candidates to "check the boxes"—pro-life, pro-marriage, pro–tax cuts for families—it will no longer be sufficient.

LIBERATING RELIGION FROM POLITICS

Finally, what about the effect of this evangelical transformation on Christianity itself? It is mostly good. A faith whose chief symbols are a crown of thorns and a cross cannot put its main hope in worldly power.

Christianity has a core mission far different from that of politics, and it should never be beholden to any political party or ideology. That doesn't mean that at particular moments faithful Christians won't find their worldview more affirmed in one political party than another, but that is quite different from becoming essentially a reliable operational wing of a political party. In recent years, many Christians felt that the latter was happening—and were made uncomfortable by it. We are therefore seeing a predictable, and probably healthy, reaction.

The danger is that this corrective could lead to overcompensation—that evangelical Christians might decide to retreat from politics, as they did in the early part of the 20th century. I rather doubt that will happen. But the best way to ensure it doesn't is for evangelicals to develop a public theology that is balanced, historically informed, durable, and grounded in Scripture. This would help smooth out the wide swings we have seen, from political disengagement to full immersion.

Rémi Brague, a distinguished professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne, puts it well in his new book *The Law of God: The Philosophical History of an Idea*: "The political and the religious are two independent sources of authority; they have crossed one another's paths more than once, but they never have merged in spite of attempts to fit them together, sometimes to the advantage of one, sometimes to that of the other. Although there has been cooperation between the two, there has never been confusion about which is which."

Cooperating on important moral enterprises while steadfastly opposing anything that smacks of a merger—that is a pretty good place for the evangelical movement to be, both for its own sake and for the sake of our politics. **NR**

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■ RUSSIA

The Problem of My Country

A dissident looks homeward

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY,
WITH PAVEL STROILOV

WHEN the news got out that I was going back to Russia to challenge Vladimir Putin's handpicked successor in the 2008 presidential election, an English friend of mine called. (I have lived in England for many years.) "Before you go, make sure that you have your last will written," she advised. "Come on," I said. "You know I hate writing. It is bad enough to have to write my manifesto, which I am doing now."

This was quite true, not only because I hate writing as such, but also because I had completely forgotten the Russian keyboard over the last 15 years. Yet I had to write that election manifesto, and do many other things I don't enjoy. It's not so much that I want to be president of Russia; as a matter of fact, I'm pretty sure I would hate the job. But there are situations in life when you have to do all you can, even if there is hardly any hope for success.

* * *

I had believed that Russia was a hopeless case ever since 1993. After the Soviet Union collapsed, I advocated a Nuremberg-style trial of the Communist regime, followed with a radical de-Communization of the country. But the new Russian elite, like many in the West, opposed that idea as a "witch hunt." As a result, it never happened, so the witches have risen again to hunt us now.

Having failed to condemn the Soviet regime and its crimes against humanity, Russia lost its last hope for recovery. As I predicted in 1993, in my book *Judgement in Moscow*, the country was doomed to decay and eventual collapse. So it seemed pointless to me to go there anymore. The Russian government agreed with me on that: Ever since 1996, its Foreign Ministry repeatedly denied me a visa.

The outlook seemed very gloomy for a long time, but nobody could then foresee just how very bad the reality would turn out to be. Who, back then, would have expected a restoration of the KGB's reign of terror? That Russia would again have dozens of political prisoners, some of them in psychiatric torture chambers? Indeed, that Russia would once again become a global threat?

Naturally, what appalled me most was the growing number of political prisoners. Mikhail Trepashkin, the lawyer who represents survivors of the 1999 apartment bombings—a series of terrorist acts blamed by the government on Chechen extremists—has been imprisoned for his investigation of the attacks. His inquiry led him dangerously close to uncovering the role of the FSB—Russia's domestic-security service and successor to the KGB—in the bombings. So the FSB planted a gun on him (a standard trick in today's Russia) and also charged him with disclosure of state secrets, alleging that he had carelessly left some top-secret documents of the old KGB lying around in his apartment.

Mikhail is asthmatic. I know how easy it is to kill an asthmatic in jail—and that is exactly what his prison guards are trying to do. They deny him medicine; they put him in a newly painted cell with no fresh air, so he is, slowly but literally, suffocating.

Boris Stomakhin, a journalist who edited a small online newsletter, has been imprisoned for his criticism of Putin's regime. His writings were ruled to constitute an "instigation to extremism," an ill-defined offense recently introduced into the Penal Code. Trying to get away from the FSB thugs who came to arrest him, Boris jumped out the window, and broke his spine and leg. Once he was arrested, he got no decent treatment; as a result, he ended up practically paralyzed. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and was transported to a GULAG (or, as it is commonly called now, PutLAG) camp. He is denied any special treatment as a handicapped person there; he is even denied warm clothes.

Perhaps the most sinister feature of Putin's neo-Soviet regime is the restoration of psychiatric repression. In the old days, it took us 20 years of persistent international campaigning to stop the Soviet abuses of psychiatry against political opponents. If there was one feature of the Communist regime that I hoped was finished forever, that was it. And yet, there have been alarming reports about people in Russia being once again put in lunatic asylums for their criticism of authorities. The latest case of that kind, as far as I know, is that of Andrei Novikov, who has been hospitalized because of his articles criticizing the regime.

The overall list of today's political prisoners is quite long: Igor Sutyagin, Valentin Danilov, Zaurbek Talkhigov, Zara Murtazaliyeva . . . Once the machinery of persecution has gained momentum, one can be sure that there will be many others whose names and cases we might never even hear about. Of course, I have tried to campaign for those people in the West. Nor was I silent about the other atrocities of the current Russian regime, such as the ongoing war against Chechnya. Alas, all my efforts were in vain: The West was preoccupied with its "global war" on terrorism, and was anxious to keep Russia on board as an alternative source of oil and gas. What is one man suffocating in prison—or even several dozens of political prisoners—compared with all that? So the West stood, to all intents and purposes, united with the KGB. Some even went so far as to claim that at least one KGB lieutenant colonel had something like a soul (maybe a very small one, and obviously not immortal, but it still could be seen in his eyes). Not for the first time, the West was building its friendship with Russia on our bones.

Mr. Bukovsky, one of the most prominent Soviet-era dissidents, is the author of the classic memoir *To Build a Castle: My Life as a Dissenter*.

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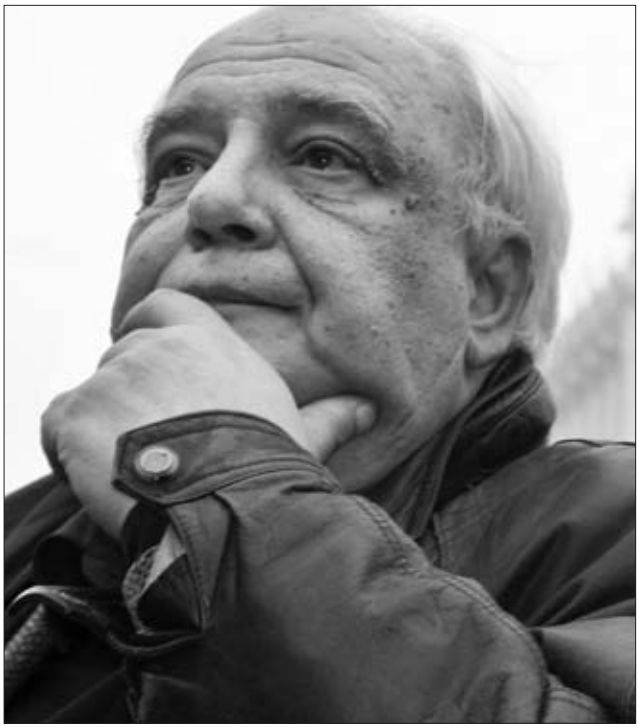
In a word, the situation seemed increasingly desperate. However, as an old political prisoner myself, I couldn't take no for an answer, thus letting my brothers die in jails. So what could I do to prevent that?

* * *

One thing that today's Kremlin really fears is that next year's presidential election, rigged as it certainly will be, may trigger a wave of mass protests, not unlike those that overthrew Moscow's allies in Ukraine and Georgia. Of course, it would be a miracle if it really happened in Russia; but that miracle is Russia's last hope.

My good friend, chess champion and human-rights activist Garry Kasparov, has been already doing all he can to help the Russian opposition prepare for such a scenario. He has had some success; but the society at large remains apathetic, while Garry's own forces are deeply divided, ranging from extreme Communists to extreme anti-Communists. All of them could unite to demand fair elections, but they could agree on neither a common candidate nor a common platform. Even though Garry is doing a great job—much better than I had hoped—this is not enough.



The author earlier this year

That was the situation when, in late May of this year, a group of Russian intellectuals—mostly journalists and academics—declared they wanted to nominate me for the presidency. It would mean a lot of hard work, with little hope for good results. But it was my chance to help the opposition and the political prisoners—two categories that tend to merge in today's Russia. I accepted, quoting the old toast, once a favorite of the dissidents in the Soviet Union: "To the success of our hopeless cause."

Over the summer, several remarkable things happened.

First, I suddenly topped the polls—well above Putin, let alone his possible successors. Certainly, all the major pollsters never included me as a possible choice. Only a few online polls allowed my name as a choice; but wherever I was included as a candidate, the first place was mine. Of course, this represented only one segment of the Russian population: those who have access to the Internet (the majority do not) and use it to visit political websites. But it was something.

Second, the Central Electoral Commission solemnly announced *urbi et orbi* that they would never, ever, register me as a candidate. They cited several hastily concocted legalistic excuses for that. Around the same time, its chairman, even more solemnly, swore "by his beard" that the elections would be absolutely fair.

YURI RYDALYOV/ITAR-TASS

Third, groups of supporters mushroomed in various regions from Kaliningrad to Sakhalin. The Russian Internet was filled with stories presenting either utopian or apocalyptic visions of my future presidency. The biggest publisher in Russia said he wanted to reprint my autobiography, first published some 30 years ago, since the dissident experience was becoming increasingly relevant to today's Russia.

So there is, among a substantial minority of Russians, interest in the movement I represent. Why is the majority apathetic? The problem with the Russian people is not that they love the KGB and its tyranny—they really don't. But after being repeatedly betrayed by their democratic leaders, they have ceased to believe in the possibility of change. Their attitude is best summed up in a popular joke about a crow sitting on a tree with a piece of cheese in its beak. A fox approaches and asks it, "Will you vote for Putin?" The crow remains silent. "Well, can't you answer a simple question? Yes or no?" "Yes!" the crow finally says. The cheese falls down; the fox grabs it and runs away. So the very sad crow sits on the treetop and muses: "Well, suppose I would say no—would that change anything?"

Recent history has given Russians good reasons to harbor such an attitude. So most of them, even when appalled at the regime, would not go to the streets to protest. They would not even vote; after all, the best choice they ever had was between a Communist and a KGB colonel.

My candidacy is, nonetheless, more likely to do well among the currently apathetic than among those who would vote for another opposition candidate (if, that is, there will be such a candidate in the actual election). This is because I am very different from any of the candidates they have been offered in the past 20 years. The whole political establishment of Russia—Left, Right, and Center—was the flesh and blood of the Soviet regime; even the sincerest anti-Communists, like Boris Yeltsin, were all former Communists. Practically all the politicians, then, were to some extent compromised. I am not—and this alone inspires people's curiosity, if not support.

Furthermore, my own view of the situation is very similar to that of these millions of alienated people. I have little hope that Russia can be changed for the better in the foreseeable future, and the idea of getting involved in Russian politics makes me sick. Yet what is happening there is so outrageous that I simply must try to do something. If I say we have reached the point when every decent man must fight even if there is no hope for victory—then they know it must be true. Only Russians can

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quite understand that paradox: We start to act only when it is hopeless.

* * *

The integrity of Russian electoral commissioners is well-known; so if they said they would never register me, they probably cannot go back on their word. However, I can still try to influence the electoral debate. So—apart from my manifesto, which outlined the measures a democratic president would have to take to dismantle the KGB regime—I brought another document with me to Moscow. It was an appeal to all the presidential candidates to join my pledge to implement the following five points if any of us comes to power:

1. Release all political prisoners.
2. Stop political persecution and review the legislation used for it today.
3. Stop abuse of psychiatry for repressive purposes.
4. Stop law-enforcement agencies' use of torture and cruel treatment.
5. Provide for a fair and independent judiciary as soon as possible.

If there is any platform capable of uniting the diverse opposition forces from Communists to anti-Communists, this is it. Moreover, once these five points are on the table, every candidate, even Kremlin-sponsored, will have to run either for them or against them, the latter being a rather awkward position.

Only one of the other democratic candidates offered immediate support for my five-point pledge: Grigory Yavlinsky, the leader of the Yabloko party, who used to be a major right-of-center politician. I had a long meeting with him; he talked about the need to participate in the December parliamentary elections—even though Putin's electoral rules are rigged against opposition parties—and also said he was prepared to ally his party with any other opposition organization that may emerge. The other opposition leaders sent messages saying that they want to stay, or get, in touch with me in the future. Since I have no personal political ambitions, they could well see me as a good choice for a mediator. If I can unite them on the basis of my five points, that is exactly what I want.

* * *

Naturally, the two largest television channels, both of which are state-controlled, ignored my visit completely. Some smaller independent radio stations, some of the newspapers, and a cable channel, REN-TV, gave me some coverage. (REN-TV has an audience of up to 50 million.)

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By the fourth day of my visit, hostile media reports started to appear. A pro-KGB paper, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, published a brief article that described me as sitting melancholically in a bookstore, promoting my book, until someone offered me a cup of tea—and I, being a "defector" like the murdered Alexander Litvinenko and obviously scared of Polonium-210, dashed to the airport and was off to London. This was a ridiculous, transparent lie: I was scheduled to address a rally in central Moscow within two days, so everyone could see that I had not left.

The following day, amazingly enough, the very same journalist who wrote that piece about me, Yulia Youzik, made a post in her blog—saying what a nasty liar she was, libeling an honest man for a few rubles. She shared many of my views, she wrote, but she had to feed her children. The morning after that, her editor fired her.

So what was originally intended to be a nasty little smear turned into a big scandal that backfired on the authorities and their propaganda machine. Long after I left, all Moscow was still discussing it actively—and indeed there is a lot to discuss. Just as in Soviet times, most of the people who serve the present regime are actually its secret haters. Few of them have the courage to repent their hypocrisy as Youzik did; but many more live with similar private anxieties. The chairman of the Electoral Commission, the very man who swore by his beard to hold a fair election provided there were no inconvenient candidates, sent a messenger to me while I was in Moscow. He wanted to have a signed copy of my book. Sure enough I signed it for him, and under the usual inscription I wrote our old slogan from Soviet times: "Respect your own Constitution!"

* * *

The final event of my visit was a rally in Triumfalnaya Square, formerly Mayakovsky Square, the very place where our dissident movement was born almost 50 years ago. Moscow City Hall authorized the rally, but presented us with the condition that no more than 500 people participate. That was odd: How on earth was I supposed to ensure that? Count the heads, and then tell the 501st person to go away? In earlier interviews, I said I was not going to do that: It was for the mayor of Moscow to go and count us if he wished.

So he invented a way: The place was cordoned off by the police and bordered with fences, with only a small entrance, where the policemen stood and, indeed, counted the heads. And, because of their historic experience, Russian people tend to avoid being counted, or registered, or anything like that. So, about 300 people went inside the fence, while almost the same number stood outside and listened.

"It is for the first time that Russian citizens will have such a choice at the elections: a prisoner or a prison-guard," I said. "In this country, with our GULAG traditions, there are surely many more former prisoners than prison-guards. And I do not believe that any of them will ever vote for a prison-guard. . . . The imprisoned Russia, the tortured Russia, must say its word.

"They tell us that we are too few and the enemy is too strong. I came to remind you that 50 years ago we were even fewer and the enemy was much stronger. And yet, we are still alive, and they are dead." **NR**

■ **ESSAY**

A Christmas Carol

A Heath family Christmas-carol program always seems like a good idea . . .

ALOÏSE BUCKLEY HEATH

None of the Heath children was born on Sunday, but many of them almost were, which may account for the fact that, although bright and bonny and good and gay they are not, bonny and gay they indubitably are.

They may get A2 in handwriting and D4 in word analysis; they may get "wholeheartedly enthusiastic" in sports and "constantly inattentive" in social studies, but they are the bonniest crew—not in the whole country; that's ridiculous, I always tell people—in New England. Though, I admit it, I don't know the rest of the country very well.

It is regrettably true that they forge their father's name to undone-homework slips (remember those A's in penmanship) at 8; that they fall in love with and torture members of the opposite sex at 11; and that by the age of 12 they have discovered that you can smoke into the exhaust fan of the first-floor lavatory with absolute safety, whereas smoking out of the third-floor bathroom window means Mother calls the Fire Department. (They learn about cigarettes young because when we catch them smoking, we beat them.)

And gay my children unquestionably are. They rollick into the house from school, burst into paroxysms of laughter at the extraordinary coincidence of their reunion from various carpools, plan their far-flung wickednesses in gales of muffled giggles, are scolded with eyes twinkling above insufficiently suppressed grins, and fall asleep in the midst of a choked chuckle at eight, nine, or ten o'clock, according to whether their bedtime was at seven, eight, or nine.

And they sing. Lord, how they sing! They sing alone or in unison, in harmony, cacophony, or competition, and if two of the stubborn ones simultaneously embark on "The Surrey with the Fringe on Top" and "Silent Night," an immediate popularity contest ensues, as other children drift into the room and join in one song or the other. If the singers are equally popular, you just have to break it up. (Not by saying, "Break it up," you understand. Who's listening? What I usually do is play "The Stars and Stripes Forever" very loudly on the piano.)

With all the gaiety and caroling that goes on in our house all year round, it is only natural that we plan, early every December, a Christmas-carol program to put on tape after it is absolutely perfect, and send to the children's grandmother as an absolutely unique, unprocurable-in-stores Christmas gift.

A piece by Aloïse Buckley Heath (1918–1967) is an NR Christmas tradition.

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One reason this always seems feasible in early December is that around then the children are infinitesimally better behaved than usual. I myself attribute this to the fact that their father and I are, not infinitesimally at all, worse. I have even discussed with Ben the potentialities of our being worse all the time, for the children's own good, but he insists he is the same at Christmastime as he is the year round, which, as I occasionally—well, maybe a little more often than occasionally—point out, is a clear admission that he is impossible all the time.

In any case, there's no question that, around Christmastime, the children are more cooperative. All of them will stand and concentrate, instead of two reading comic books and three wrestling under the piano. They all willingly sing, "*fa-la-la-la-la, la-la! la! la!*" even though most of the boys, and all of the girls under 12, say it makes them feel silly. All in all, it seems an ideal time to plan a Christmas-carol program, and I do so in spite of a) an unbroken record of failure, and b) the boys.

Boys, as anyone with fewer resources than the director of the Vienna Boys' Choir knows, are an insuperable obstacle to group singing. I am convinced that Baroness von Trapp had hers wired for sound.

In our family, 21-year-old Jim is the only dependable boy. He has a soft, melodious tenor voice, he sings *fa-la-la* without shame, and he whacks the little ones when they fidget. Seventeen-year-old John, who also has a nice voice, is, unfortunately, musically gifted, and refuses to waste his talent on mere singing. He plays the descant to the carols on his recorder, and if there is not a satisfactory descant he composes one, which is lovely, but it leaves Jim alone and lonely down there below middle C. Buckley, at 13, sings a high and piercingly sweet soprano, but he is under the impression that a listening world will believe his voice has changed if he emits all sounds an octave lower than is normal to him. And he sings that way until his ribs are so sore from his brothers' and sisters' pounding that he can barely sing at all, which, as I keep pointing out, may be good for discipline, but not for Christmas-carol programs. Timothy, who is a crotchety 8, refuses flatly to make any concessions on the part of the language as it is spoken, to the language as it is sung. "*Glo-o-o-o-o, o-o-o-o-o, o-o-o-o-o-o, ria*" is not for Tim. He sings "*Glo-*," compares the marble in his right pocket with the marble collection in his left pocket, and rejoins the chorale unerringly on "*ria*," but neither pleading nor pummeling will induce him to vocalize all those finky "aws."

All this is a little hard on Pam, who is 19 and who, as the conscientious and efficient head of her school Madrigal Club last year, has much higher standards than the rest of us. Our carol program this year was to be not just mother at the piano, John at the recorder, and nine children singing in unison. It was to include part-singing; solos, duets, trios, and quartets; Buckley on the drums; 10-year-old Jennifer on the triangle; and a piano duet by Betsey and Alison, who are 11 and 12 and hate each other.*

Our first difficulties I could see coming. Buckley played the drum, not with a gently medieval boom, nor even with a gay 17th-century rat-a-tat, but as if he were soloing during a pause in a program by the Rolling Stones, which was impressive, to be sure, but reduced the singers to utter inaudibility. Jennifer ting'd on the triangle whenever it seemed to her that she had not tung for quite long enough, and Betsey and Alison, who have never entirely grasped the purpose of a duet, exchanged sidelong black-eyed glares and raced each other through "Jingle Bells," Alison winning handily by a good two and a half measures.

Timothy and little Janet, 5, who were to solo as friendly beasts in the carol known only to the parents of small children, "The Friendly Beasts," were less than cooperative. Janet refused to sing, "*I, said the cow all white and red*," because she said cows were ugly and she was not; besides, everyone kept smiling at her. And Tim persisted in singing, "*I, said the donkey, all shaggy and brown*," as "*I. Said the donkey. All shaggy. And brown. I carried. His Mother. Uphill. And down*."

After the special-effects numbers the group launched into the standard Christmas carol while Pam conducted and I concentrated on the piano. I have to concentrate harder than most people on the piano because of an abnormal tendency to play everything in D major. Our repertoire was nearly finished when Pam addressed the group in a less-than-friendly tone. "If anybody's being funny around here, they just can just stop it right now."

There was a blank silence. Long blue eyes met wide black eyes without the glimmer of a twinkle. Pam waited a minute, then she said: "Mother, let's start over, and I'll take the piano while you come out here and listen. There's something peculiar going on. Now listen *carefully*."

I listened carefully, and it was then I decided that either my children are not quite bright enough to live, or else they are too gay to bear.

Do you know what "afforient" is? Neither did I till I heard Priscilla, who is 15 and should know better, sweetly warble that

*Above all, every word was to be as clear as a bell. Pam even taught us a little song: "Whether you whisper soft, or whether you loudly call, distinctly, distinctly speak. Or do not speak at all." Whose melody we assimilated rather more quickly than its meaning.

VIGGO JOHANSEN/THE BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY/GETTY IMAGES

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the three kings afforient were, and I asked her. "Afforient," if you are interested, is the state of being disoriented, or wandering, as one does over field and fountain, moor and mountain.

And has anybody ever wondered where the Ranger is on Christmas Eve? Has anyone, for that matter, ever given a single thought to the Ranger on Christmas Eve? Well, Betsey Heath has. "*Away* is the Ranger," she will inform you, if you listen carefully. And obviously, he is away because there is no crib for his bed. After all, why should the Ranger stick around here, when he hasn't even got a crib, much less a bed, for Pete's sake!

Janet, canny little Janet, all of whose sins are premeditated and blatant, sang exactly what she intended to sing. "*No L, no L, the angels did say*." It was a matter of the angels' alphabet, she explained to me a little tiredly. "a b c d e f g h i j k m n o p q r s t u v w x y z. No L, get it, Mother, *No L*!" I eyed her suspiciously, because more humor in the family we do not need, but I let it pass.

Jennifer settled my next problem, which had to do with the angels. Do you know how the angel of the Lord shone around? He shone around in a glowy manner, that's how. While shepherds watch'd their flock by night, she explained, the angel of the Lord came and glowy showed around. How else?

geography to their younger siblings, Pam and Jim simply revised the Christian religion.

Pam, even Pam, kept announcing in her clear, sweet contralto that God and sin are reconciled; but she realized immediately, when it was pointed out to her, that God was far more likely to reconcile Himself to sinners than to sin, even if the book hadn't said so, which it had.

Jim had to argue a little. He was the one who kept urging the shepherds to leave their "you's" and leave their "am's" and rise up, shepherds, and follow.

"What in Heaven's name is this about you's and am's?" I asked him.

"Oh-h-h, rejection of personality, denial of self," said Jim grandly. "Practically the central thesis of Christian theology."

"Of course, *I* don't go to a Catholic college, but *I* think that's Communist theory, not Christian theology," I told him. "In any case, could you come down from those philosophic heights and join us shepherds down here with our ewes (female sheep) and rams (male sheep)?"

"If you insist," said Jim, with the impudent grin of the 21-year-old whose dear mother is incontrovertibly in the right,

Do you know what 'afforient' is? Neither did I till I heard Priscilla, who is 15 and should know better, sweetly warble that the three kings afforient were, and I asked her.

Have you ever wondered, in the long watches of the night, what Child is this Who laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping? Well, it is the Child Whom angels greet with Anne the Sweet, while shepherds' watches keeping. Well, St. Anne was Mary's mother, certainly sweet and probably dead, argued Alison. Why *wouldn't* she be with the angels? As for the shepherds, what with their setting off for Bethlehem, well known for its good and bad thieves, keeping their watches was a very friendly gesture on the part of the angels. Anne the Sweet probably thought of it.

Some of them were taking an individual called Good Heed to the angels' ward, many of them with the jellied toast proclaiming; though all of them sang the "Coventry Carol," 20 of whose 28 words are "Lully, lully," absolutely correctly.

If anyone is interested in the geography of Bethlehem, I can tell you categorically that it lies on the seashore, just below the town of Dul. We know it is *below* Dul because the carol states very clearly that Bethlehem is what in Dul see you *below* (sometimes written *in dulci jubilo*), and we know it is on the sea because among the deep in dreamless sleep the silent stars go by, so that had to be the stars' *reflection*, see, Mother? Because they couldn't very well *shine* among the deep, could they, Mother?

This is the kind of thing that happens when your children get B2 in Reasoning Ability and C4 in Independent Reading.

The older children, to give credit where credit is due, made their misinterpretations on a far loftier level. Leaving history and

and besides, it's right down there in black and white.

But I was too weary to go on. "Children," I said. "Let's just do one song absolutely *perfectly*. Let's concentrate on 'Silent Night,' because that's the one we know best anyway. Pam and Priscilla can do the alto, John can do the descant, the rest of you just sing nice and softly, and Buckley, I don't want to hear one single note below middle C."

They lined up, looking very clean and handsome and holy, Jim and John at the back, Timothy and Janet on either side of Pam at the piano, and the middle echelon sensibly and unquarrelsomely distributed in the middle according to heights. Just like the von Trapp family, I thought to myself happily. Pam turned and gave them all a long and, I hoped, extremely stern look, before she turned back to play the opening measures.

"*Silent night, holy night*," nine young voices chanted softly, and I noticed Jennifer and Betsey beginning to break up in twinkles and dimples. "*All is calm, all is bright*," they went on, John's recorder piping low and clear. Buckley and Alison clapped their hands briefly over their mouths. "*Round John Virgin, Mother and Child*," the chorus swelled sweetly, and I rapped hard on the piano. "Just who," I asked, in my most restrained voice, "is Round John Virgin?"

"One of the 12 opossums," the ten young voices answered promptly, and they collapsed over the piano, from the piano bench onto the floor, convulsed by their delicate wit.

And that's why we didn't have this year's Christmas-carol program. **NR**

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the long view

ROB LONG

Transcript from the al-Jazeera political talk show *The al-Irshad Group*

December 11, 2007

AL-IRSHAD: "Issue One! Steady Teddy, Make Her Dead-y! British schoolteacher Gillian Gibbons, teaching in Sudan, made the unbelievable error of allowing her class to name a teddy bear after the Prophet Mohammed, Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him. Question: What is the appropriate punishment to mete out to the British Whore of Khartoum? I ask you, Most Exalted Imam Qu'Turush?"

QU'TURUSH: "There is a technique called, I think, flaying, which involves the peeling of skin from the living body of the sinner, whose cries and begging for mercy go unheeded by the audience, and who, eventually, falls silently into the cold embrace of death."

AL-IRSHAD: "And this is the just punishment for the teacher?"

QU'TURUSH: "The *teacher?* No, no, no. This is what I propose to do to the *students*. It was they, after all, who came up with the name. The semi-literate teacher, brain no doubt addled by syphilis, should merely be forced to eat the dead and then be burned alive."

AL-IRSHAD: "Interesting. Salil Faqtb, your thoughts?"

SALIL FAQTB: "Once again, Qu'Turush delivers his liberal pieties. Sure, yeah, I'd love to live in a world of candy canes and rainbows and happy shiny people, but the truth is, this kind of blasphemy needs to be *punished*. Not coddled. Look, first it's teddy bears—"

QU'TURUSH: "You know, *liberal* is not a bad word, okay? Flaying and forced cannibalism and burning at the stake are what we do now because we know more. One of these days you're going to join the 9th century, Salil, and I—"

SALIL FAQTB: "You cur! You filthy whoremastering Jew!"

QU'TURUSH: "Again with the personal attacks! You're not addressing my argument. I say, flaying, forced cannibalism, and torching are perfectly acceptable modern ways to—"

SALIL FAQTB: "So you're saying it's okay to name a plush toy after the Prophet, Peace and Blessings—"

QU'TURUSH: "I'm saying—"

SALIL FAQTB: "Let me finish, sodomite!"

QU'TURUSH: "I'm saying—"

AL-IRSHAD: "Exit question! Toys, loose women in cars—are jihadists losing the PR war? I ask you, Ali Ba'Nasri, commentator on al-Jazeera's *Hardstones*."

ALI BA'NASRI: "Look, the poll numbers we're seeing suggest that the 'wrong track' responses are surging. This has got to worry some of the higher-ups in the movement. They've got to do something to get these poll numbers back in the high 'right track' range."

SALIL FAQTB: "Who are these people you are polling? Homosexuals?"

ALI BA'NASRI: "We're controlling for homosexuals, Jews, and women."

QU'TURUSH: "These numbers go up and down all the time. We're polling ourselves to death."

AL-IRSHAD: "Issue Two! I-ran Outta There! The Zionist-controlled government of the Villain Bush recently released a National Intelligence Estimate claiming that Iran ceased its nuclear arms program in 2003. Question: Is Iran the next Islamic superpower, or all stubble and no beard? I ask you, Salil Faqtb."

SALIL FAQTB: "You know, Irshad, this is the kind of question that really misses the point. I'm not surprised you're asking it—you always miss the point—but no one ever thought that Iran was going to be a terribly powerful Islamic republic—"

QU'TURUSH: "Nonsense! You yourself sat on this panel a few months ago and claimed that the Iranian Revolutionary Guards would drive Israel into the sea—"

SALIL FAQTB: "I said I *hoped* that they would drive—"

QU'TURUSH: "And now you're backpedaling!"

AL-IRSHAD: "Exit question! Will Iran ever develop a nuclear bomb, and if so, will it ever drop it on the infidel? Salil Faqtb?"

SALIL FAQTB: "Yes, eventually. And yes, eventually. This is a minor setback in—"

AL-IRSHAD: "Qu'Turush?"

QU'TURUSH: "No. And no. The coward Ahmadinejad is too terrified of an American invasion. He is also part Jew, is what I'm hearing."

AL-IRSHAD: "Ali Ba'Nasri?"

ALI BA'NASRI: "Impossible to say."

AL-IRSHAD: "The correct answer is no, they will not develop a nuclear bomb, but yes, they will drop one on the infidel, having received a bomb via divine miracle. Issue Three! Huck-a-Believer! Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee is moving forward in the polls in both Iowa and New Hampshire. He is the only credible person of the Book running in that Satanic nation's election. Question: Can he beat Hillary? Ali Ba'Nasri?"

ALI BA'NASRI: "No. Frankly, his extreme Christian views are going to lose both Florida and California."

AL-IRSHAD: "Qu'Turush?"

QU'TURUSH: "No, he can't beat Hillary. His recent major weight loss will be seen as effeminate and unmanly."

AL-IRSHAD: "Salil Faqtb?"

SALIL FAQTB: "No, no. Look, Irshad, he can't win the Republican primary. He's a tax-and-spender."

AL-IRSHAD: "The answer is yes! President Huckabee will usher in a new religious revival in America until he is assassinated by Israeli agents which will touch off a mass conversion in America to Islam and result in a worldwide caliphate. Bye bye!"

SALIL FAQTB: "What?"

ALI BA'NASRI: "That's the weirdest prediction I've ever heard."

AL-IRSHAD: "Bye bye!"

QU'TURUSH: "This program is becoming foolish."

AL-IRSHAD: "Bye bye!"

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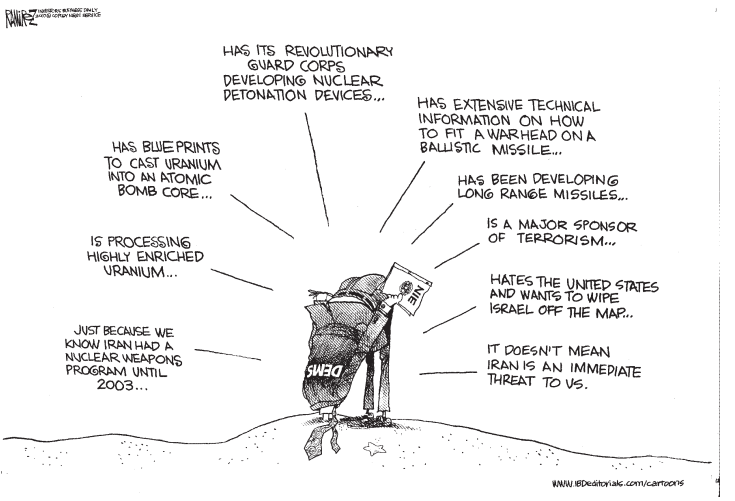
"Victimless crimes seem so futile."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HAS BLUEPRINTS TO CAST URANIUM INTO AN ATOMIC BOMB CORE...
HAS BEEN DEVELOPING LONG RANGE MISSILES...
IS A MAJOR SPONSOR OF TERRORISM...
IS PROCESSING HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM...
HATES THE UNITED STATES AND WANTS TO WIPE ISRAEL OFF THE MAP...
JUST BECAUSE WE KNOW IRAN HAD A NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM UNTIL 2003...
IT DOESN'T MEAN IRAN IS AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO US.
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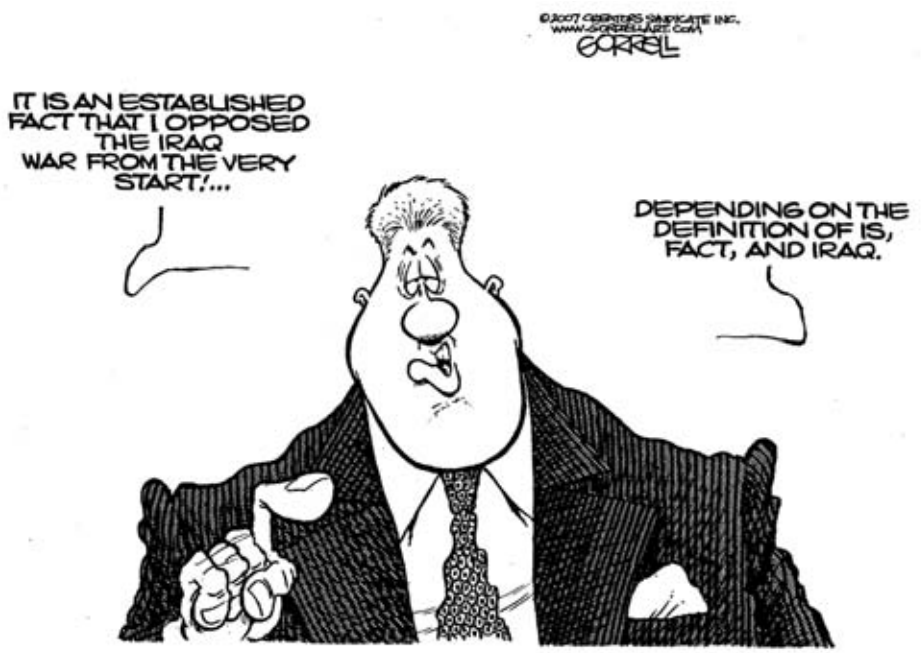
"First off, I'd like to categorically deny any wrongdoing . . ."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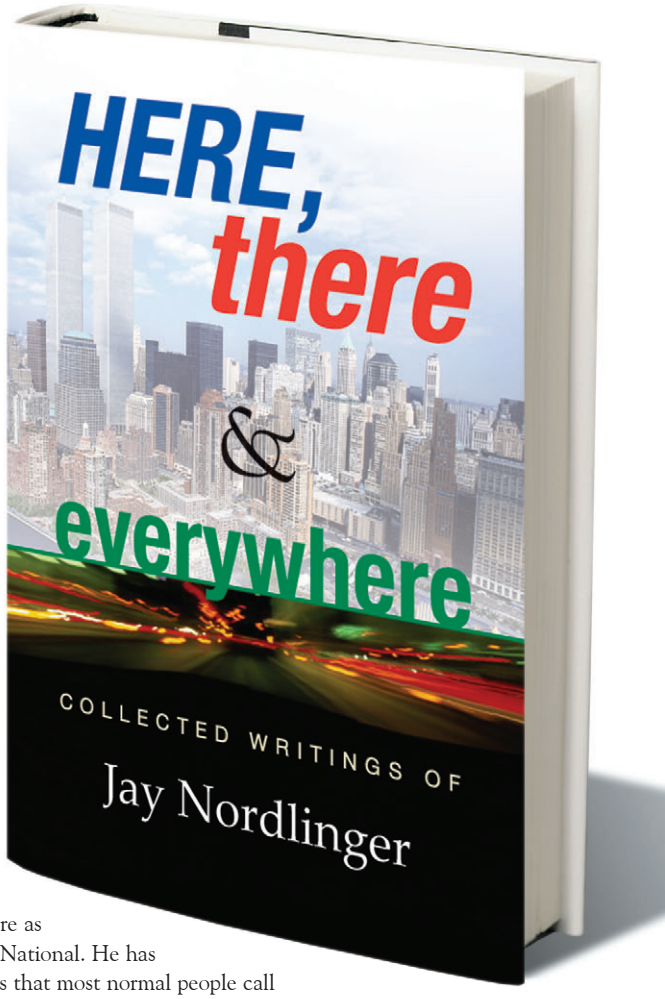
O JAY, CAN YOU SEE?

And does he ever see in his new collection — you will, too

We're happy to announce a new collection from *National Review* senior editor Jay Nordlinger: *Here, There & Everywhere*. This handsome 528-page hardcover is a must for your library, and makes a wonderful gift. Here's what some leading lights have to say about Jay, his remarkable talents, and this long-awaited, wonderful array of essays, reports, speeches, and ruminations:



PAUL JOHNSON: Jay Nordlinger is one of America's most versatile and pungent writers. He is at home in geopolitics and sociology, in sport and music and literature, and to all these topics he brings an inquiring mind, deep knowledge, and an engaging style. This collection shows him at his wide-ranging best.

MARK HELPRIN: Like all great reporters and essayists, Nordlinger seizes upon the essential details that give a story life in the present and years after. What is most striking about these essays is not their integrity, fearlessness, wit, superb craftsmanship, and the long view they reveal, but that Nordlinger is a man in full. When he writes, "For me, the personal transcends the national, historical, and political," you know immediately how his portrait of our age has transcended contemporary affairs to read like history. And though always written in pursuit of the enduring and the true, his pieces are so dense in fact and sparkling anecdote that to read them is like opening one present after another. A good man is hard to find: You have found him.

NORMAN PODHORETZ: No matter the subject—and what subject has he not touched upon?—Jay Nordlinger writes like the great conversationalist he is. The easy informality of his style never fails to engage and delight, the wide-ranging cultivation it reflects never fails to enlighten, and the energy that propels it never fails to amaze.

MARK STEYN: Unlike most of us political pundits, Jay Nordlinger has many other strings to his bow. In fact, most of us don't even have a bow, but Jay does: You're as likely to find him at Bayreuth or Salzburg as at a political convention. Or at Augusta National. He has what British politicians term a "hinterland"—a vast array of interests beyond politics that most normal people call "life." He writes brilliantly about music, and profoundly about golf, and very perceptively about those strange little linguistic tics that seem to pop up out of nowhere and catch the spirit of the age. For his fans, this long overdue Nordlinger reader is a virtuoso display of his rare versatility, on subjects from Rummy to Rosie, Cuba to comedy, ethnic cleansing in Iraq to "erotic vagrancy" in Hollywood. He is a Jay of all trades and a master of . . . well, almost all (we have a few musical differences).

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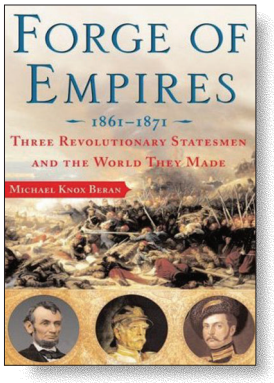
Parallel Lives And Legacies



Forge of Empires: Three Revolutionary Statesmen and the World They Made, 1861–1871, by Michael Knox Beran (Free Press, 496 pp., $30)

ARTHUR W. HERMAN

When do dying empires become living nations? *Forge of Empires* offers a fascinating and timely answer to that question—one that, incidentally, may hold the key to the entire Middle East. With the glaring exception of Israel, most countries in that region are not nations at all but disjointed scraps of territory left behind either by long-dead despots (as with Egypt, Iran, and Saudi Arabia) or by departing colonial powers (as with Syria, Iraq, and Pakistan).

Now Michael Knox Beran reminds us that in the middle of the 19th century much of Europe also consisted of "tribes with flags"—as did, to an important degree, the United States. The story he tells is what happened when three of these emerging nations hit an existential wall. By 1860 the people and leaders of Germany, Russia, and America discovered that they could no longer sustain themselves on their original historical foundations. If they were to prosper or even survive, they needed an infusion of something new: freedom in the fullest and truest sense.

Thanks to its 16th president, Abraham Lincoln, the United States managed to pull through the crisis, albeit barely. Russia briefly flirted with freedom—when Czar Alexander II signed a proclamation freeing Russia's millions of serfs in 1861—but then pulled back at the last minute. Terrified by the threat of assassination (a threat that came true in Lincoln's case), Czar Alexander turned from reformer to reactionary. In 1917 his grandson would be deposed as czar and then murdered on Lenin's orders. Russia would be turned into a slaughterhouse and gulag by one of the most evil regimes in history.

The third country was Germany. When Americans were fighting and dying to decide the fate of freedom at Gettysburg, Germany was not a nation at all. But its master architect, Otto von Bismarck, ultimately decided that power was more important than freedom, and set out to create a German nation on that basis—a dream that ended in the nightmare of Auschwitz and the suicide of Bismarck's last twisted disciple in the rubble of Berlin in 1945.

Beran's is a dark book illuminated by flashes of lightning. Its prose is on an epic, even operatic scale. Three of its principal characters are poets: Leo Tolstoy, Walt Whitman, and Richard Wagner. Wagnerian leitmotifs appear and reappear with astonishing complexity as Beran moves the reader from one scene to another and offers an enormous cast of characters. Ostensibly, *Forge of Empires* is about three very different nations in the 19th century and the character of the three men who guided them: Lincoln, Bismarck, and Czar Alexander II. But its real theme is blood: the blood that a people has to pay now to be free, or pay later in much greater quantities in order to remain slaves.

Like today's Middle East, the three nations Beran describes had powerful vested interests with no desire for freedom as a way of life; quite the opposite. Pre-unification Germany hosted scores of princelings left behind by the breakup of the Holy Roman Empire. For hundreds of years they had relied on anarchy, not unity, to preserve their power; this redounded to the advantage of Germany's neighbors. Russia's great landowners needed their vast estates and serfs in order to preserve their wealth and status, as did the slave-masters of the American South's rural economy.

Beran vividly paints the picture of a pre–Civil War America that had become broken since its founding, split between a feudal regime of slaveholders south of the Mason-Dixon Line (he points out that in some tidewater regions of South Carolina, slaves made up more than 80 percent of the population) and north of that line a growing, thriving urban society on the verge of takeoff but held back by the dead hand of the past.

Beran's America in 1860 is doubly tragic. It represents both a betrayal of the Founding Fathers' hopes, and a foiled modernity. In the hands of such lackluster presidents as Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan, and of a complacent Congress eager for compromise, America's experiment in creating a new future for humanity had almost died.

Yet out of failure, and the explosion of civil war that resulted, would come a new direction and new hope thanks to Abraham Lincoln—the central hero of the book. Beran's brilliant analysis of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address focuses on a single crucial phrase, when Lincoln said that the sacrifice of 40,000 dead at Little Round Top and at Pickett's Charge represented a "new birth of freedom" for America. In Lincoln's view, America had been literally born again, not just because it was committed to purge itself of slavery but because its trial of fire had washed away, in human blood, the squalid compromises of the past.

Like Lincoln, Beran sees us as redeemed as a nation in the bloodbath of Shiloh, Gettysburg, and the Wilderness. This is an unashamedly old-fashioned reading of the War Between the States. And something like it permeates his reading of German and Russian history, as well. Freedom requires first purging one's sins; purging one's sins demands blood. In the case of Russia, that sin was serfdom. In the case of Prussia and Germany, it was overturning the peace of central Europe for the sake of an elusive national and racial ideal. By rejecting Lincoln's course,

Mr. Herman's new book, *Gandhi and Churchill: The Epic Rivalry That Destroyed an Empire and Forged Our Age*, will be published by Bantam in April.

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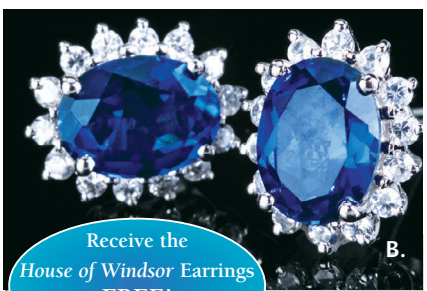

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Bismarck and Alexander only postponed the days of reckoning. One would be paid out in the firestorms of Hamburg and Dresden, not to mention the slaughter of Verdun and Stalingrad; the other in the Russian civil war and the gulag. Russia's final reckoning may still not be over, as Vladimir Putin's shadow steadily spreads across that tragic, tortured country.

There are grim lessons here for the future of the world, as well as the nations of the Middle East. Today's Iraq has already paid part of that horrible cost. It may be just beginning for the others. By Beran's reading, postponing freedom, and postponing the day of reckoning, only raises the final toll. Most civilized human beings would prefer some other option, some set of diplomatic compromises or resolutions that can avert more turmoil and bloodshed. But it was Bismarck who said, "The great questions of our time will be decided not by resolutions and majority votes, but by blood and iron." Who can doubt that he was right then, and right now? **NR**

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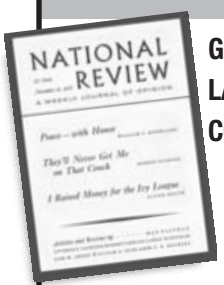

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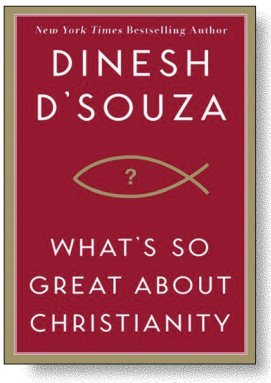
D'Souza and The Divine



What's So Great About Christianity, by Dinesh D'Souza (Regnery, 348 pp., $27.95)

DAVID KLINGHOFFER

In lining up book reviews for the Christmas issue, it was a swashbuckling move on the part of NR's literary editor, a Christian, to assign this work of Christian apologetics to a Jew.

The book's author, Dinesh D'Souza, states at the outset that he hopes to win converts. With all respect, I'm not buying—not because I reject his argument that Christianity was the driving force behind the development of Western civilization, or that it accords well with modern science and with the best that has been thought in Western philosophy. That's true as far as it goes.

Yet from Mr. D'Souza, of whom I count myself a fan, I expected a more compelling defense of Christianity, a faith that I have myself defended on many occasions. His gifts as a writer include a fearless disdain for what a responsible conservative is *supposed* to think, along with an admirable simplicity and directness of expression. In *What's So Great About Christianity*, a particularly good chapter explains Immanuel Kant's relevance to the New Atheist debate in terms that are startlingly clear and easy to grasp.

He opens the book with a verse from the New Testament, I Peter 3:15: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that is within you." That is, a Christian needs to know how to answer unbelievers.

For a Christian apologist, as for a Jewish one, the responsibility is first of all to be aware of what the toughest challenges are that have been posed to your faith. By that, I don't mean the challenges that get the most media play. Judging from the space he devotes to it, D'Souza thinks the biggest, baddest challenge comes from the best-selling New Atheist authors, of whom Richard Dawkins is the most effective.

In *The God Delusion*, Dawkins's argument is primarily with critics of Darwinian evolution. Which makes sense, since Darwin's theory of a material mechanism that fully explains the development of all life would put out of business any conception of God as life's creator, the essential Biblical view of the Deity.

Judging from some smartly phrased remarks early on, I thought D'Souza was going to come down hard, and deservedly so, on conservatives and other thoughtful folks who complacently neglect even to look into this issue: "Without realizing it, Christians have become postmodernists of a sort: They live by the gospel of the two truths. There is religious truth, reserved for Sundays and days of worship, and there is secular truth, which applies the rest of the time."

Exactly! Alas, Mr. D'Souza's writing on Darwinism here is confused and not very useful. He wants to accept Darwinian evolution while rejecting "Darwinism," not realizing that there is no such distinction to be made except in theologies that haven't looked to the depths of what Darwin's theory actually means.

D'Souza's argument against intelligent design, meanwhile, boils down to taking a headcount among scientists, most of whom embrace orthodox Darwinism. But if contests of ideas were decided by a show of hands among academics, that would put an end very quickly to any case for Christianity.

Of course, Darwin and his New Atheist avatars pose their challenge not to Christianity alone but to theistic religion in general. A successful brief for Christian faith must take into account strong objections to D'Souza's religion in particular.

Mr. Klinghoffer is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute and author of *Why the Jews Rejected Jesus: The Turning Point in Western History*.

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So then, as Jews and Christians, let's be honest. I'll admit that the most troubling argument against Judaism is the behavior and attitudes of certain Jews, including some who identify themselves as adherents of Torah. So it is, you would think, with Christians and Christianity.

Accepting Jesus in your heart is understood to be a transformative experience. Otherwise, what's the point? On D'Souza's last page he quotes Paul in Galatians: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (2:20). Yet in history, the effects of this transformation have varied so wildly among Christians as to call into question whether embracing Jesus has any reliably positive effects at all.

D'Souza understands that he needs to put into some perspective the outrages committed by Christians over the centuries. He rightly reminds us that, measured in terms of body counts, world-historical crimes motivated by paganism or secularism (such as those of Hitler and Stalin) far overshadow any particular crime associated with believers in the Christian God.

He also engages in some historical revisionism about the Crusades and the Inquisition. The former was undertaken as a defensive measure against Muslim aggression toward Christians in the Middle East. But granting that point, a Jew would still think of the spring of 1096, when the Christian knights of the First Crusade were marching through Germany on the way to the Holy Land. How did fighting Muslims on another continent justify the slaughter of about a quarter of the Jewish population of the Rhineland?

A Christian apologist may point out that the Spanish Inquisition resulted in the execution of only 2,000 Jews-turned-Christians and other suspected heretics over the course of 350 years. But what of the wild anti-Semitic pogroms across Spain, whipped up by a popular Catholic preacher, that killed up to 100,000 Jews in the year 1391 alone? D'Souza ought to have a better way of explaining how Christians have ended up doing such things so many times.

In another chapter, D'Souza writes of how, in the abusive, tyrannical Christian states of Europe, "the wrong kind of Christianity had come to dominate Western society." But this is like saying that anyone who ever claimed to be a Christian but committed acts of savagery wasn't a real Christian, whereas all the wonderful people

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who call themselves Christian really are just that. By such logic, all Christians are wonderful people and always have been. What a religion!

Can the truth be so convenient? Maybe, like me, you saw the recently discovered trove of photos of daily life among the staff at Auschwitz. One showed the adjutant to the commandant in 1944, lighting the candles on the death camp's Christmas tree. Not a real Christian, of course.

Who is a real Christian, then? The day I finished reading D'Souza's book, I ran into a Christian friend at the supermarket. She's a sweet and devout Evangelical, the wife of an enthusiastically philo-Semitic philanthropist. She had a cartload full of kosher food and was busily preparing for a fundraising reception for a Jewish charitable cause at her home, where the former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. would be speaking.

In any fully satisfying apologetic work, the author would have to make sense not only of the many attractive cases like my friend but of the countless repulsive ones too.

I said earlier that an apologetic work has to face not just the best *publicized* but simply the *best* challenges. If history can be seen as refuting a central Christian claim, an even stronger challenge is presented to New Testament teaching by the rest of the Bible. Here too D'Souza comes up short.

He says he wants to clarify what makes Christianity "unique" among religions, not what makes it "best." Well, why not say what makes it best? Regarding the claim of uniqueness, he has Judaism in mind and directs some gentle barbs at Hebrew spirituality.

But as with the Darwin issue, he needs to inform himself better. He says, for instance, that the idea of martyrdom is "largely alien to Judaism." Hardly. Since Christians turned on Jews so violently a millennium ago, pulling back from their fury only recently, Jewish thinkers have had plenty of time to reflect on what it means to die for your faith, a meaning that was incorporated in Jewish liturgy from ancient times. The central prayer *Shema*, recited in the morning and at night, is traditionally understood as offering an opportunity to contemplate giving up our lives to sanctify God's name and attest to His unity.

More fatally, there is the difficulty raised by the Hebrew Bible about a central premise of the Christian Testament. That premise holds that Jews could be free now of "the Law," if we would but accept Jesus Christ. It's only "human pride," in D'Souza's view, that would dissuade a person from accepting such a generous offer.

No, it's not sinful pride: It is sacred scripture. The plausibility of Christian religion rests on how well it fits with everything we know about God from the pages of revelation that preceded Christianity. Nothing in the Hebrew Bible remotely suggests that the relationship between God and the Jews described in the Torah, a relationship conducted according to a grammar of laws, was intended to be anything other than eternal, as the Torah itself says explicitly over and over again.

The Jews' refusal to submit to a misreading of their Bible is the most basic reason they rejected Jesus. It's also, I think, the reason the Christian Church was for so many centuries obsessed with the Jews. There was an instinctive, if suppressed, awareness that Jewish intransigence proceeded from their seeing a basic problem with Christianity itself.

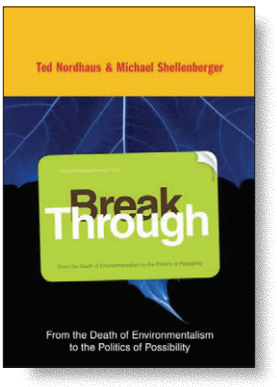
A Christian apologist should recognize this and offer a plausible response not only to Dawkins or Hitchens but to the rabbis and other Jewish teachers and interpreters from Moses and Isaiah through Maimonides and up to the present day. **NR**

OLD WORDS

Up in the crowded attic of the mind,
all the old words are stored. And you can find
them packed in boxes, or in the creaking drawers
of dusty, antique, mahogany armoires.

—MICHAEL CREAGAN

Green Death?



Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility, by Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger (Houghton Mifflin, 256 pp., $25)

STEVEN F. HAYWARD

I HAD occasion some months ago to chide an environmental scientist—who had helped Greenpeace deliver a scurrilous attack against me—about the debilitating effect green extremists have on environmentalism as a whole. The intransigence and apocalypticism of the most vocal and leftward faction of environmentalism hinder its effectiveness and are a chief cause of the stalemate over most environmental issues today. As I wrote in an e-mail: "You might ponder something I suggest to environmentalists who are willing to listen: that they contemplate the lesson of William F. Buckley's deliberate strategy in the 1950s of marginalizing the John Birch Society. As Buckley understood, conservatives would never have serious influence in American politics so long as conservative intellectuals tolerated Bircher extremism. I think there is a close parallel at work in environmental politics today. I cannot fix that problem.

Mr. Hayward is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and principal author of the Pacific Research Institute's annual *Index of Leading Environmental Indicators*.

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It is going to have to come from within the environmental establishment itself. That means you."

My correspondent was too timid to acknowledge the challenge, but Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger, two environmentalists and card-carrying members of the "progressive" Left, have stepped up to attempt something very much along this line. Nordhaus and Shellenberger operate an environmental-research firm in California, and burst on the scene three years ago when they presented a long memorandum to the annual meeting of the Environmental Grantmakers Association titled "The Death of Environmentalism." The duo argued that the conventional environmental movement had reached a dead end because it had become just another narrow special-interest group. The environmental movement as then constituted, they argued, needed to die and be reborn within a broader progressive movement.

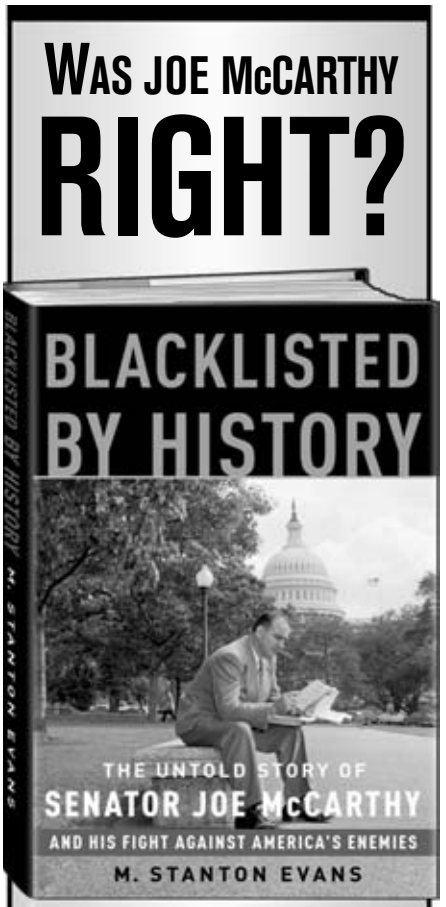
"The Death of Environmentalism" became an instant sensation and marked out its authors as the "bad boys" of environmental activism. Not surprisingly, they received a mixed reaction. While some environmentalists embraced the memorandum, many others lashed out against the young upstarts. Sierra Club executive director Carl Pope, chief ideological enforcer of the antediluvian greens, professed himself "deeply disappointed and angered by it. . . . It is unfair, unclear, and divisive." Pope's 5,000-word reply to Nordhaus and Shellenberger essentially boiled down to the argument that there was nothing wrong with environmentalism that still more intransigence wouldn't cure.

Nordhaus and Shellenberger have expanded their argument in *Break Through*, and although there is much here with which conservatives will disagree, it is nonetheless an important book for its genuine self-criticism of environmentalism and its attempt to break out of the rut of contemporary environmental politics.

Break Through comes in two distinct parts. The first half of the book, "The Politics of Limits," takes the environmental movement to the woodshed and delivers a thorough thrashing that is congruent with criticisms conservatives and eco-skeptics have long made. They scorn the apocalypticism that has dominated environmental discourse, seeing its essential pessimism as a hindrance to political and social success. They also acknowledge and repudiate the misanthropy that often comes to the surface in environmental agitation; human beings and what we make are a part of the planet's environment, too. Environmentalists "see in housing development only the loss of nonhuman habitat—not the construction of vital human habitat. Thus, the vast majority of environmental strategies aim to *constrain* rather than *unleash* human activity." And they reject environmental romanticism, noting, as with other forms of political romanticism, its danger: "Environmental tales of tragedy begin with Nature in harmony and almost always end in quasi-authoritarian politics."

They think the Kyoto Protocol a dead-end approach to climate change; they argue that it is a substantive mistake to classify carbon dioxide, the principal nutrient for plant life, as a "pollutant" similar to smog—thereby breaking conspicuously with Al Gore's relentless refrain about "global-warming pollution." They clobber Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (and NIMBYism generally) for hypocritical opposition to the Cape Wind wind-power project, and they trash the "environmental justice" movement for its superficiality and abuse of facts and reason ("Despite their rhetoric of expansiveness, environmental justice advocates have made environmentalism smaller, not larger"). "Environmentalists who take antimaterialist positions on everything from global warming to local development," they write, "do so not because they are hard-hearted but because they are narrow-minded."

Above all, they reject the "limits to growth" mentality that has been near the center of environmental thought for two generations: "Environmentalists have tended to view economic growth as the cause but not the solution to ecological crisis. Environmentalists like to emphasize the ways in which the economy depends on ecology, but often miss the



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ways in which thinking ecologically depends on prospering economically. . . . Few things have hampered environmentalism more than its longstanding position that limits to growth are the remedy for ecological crises."

If environmentalists take some of this critique to heart, the movement might emerge from its temperamental adolescence and begin to address real problems with real answers. Not surprisingly, given this critique, Nordhaus and Shellenberger see economic growth and human ingenuity as the cornerstone of any successful environmentalism for the 21st century. Whether the problem is preserving the tropical rain forests of Brazil or reducing the exposure of inner-city residents to air pollution, the common denominator for solutions must be increasing prosperity. This is a far cry from the late environmental icon David Brower, who once placed a full-page ad in the *New York Times* with the message, "Economics is a form of brain damage."

On the issue of global warming, the authors insist that constraints on greenhouse-gas emissions will never work. Instead they advocate massive research (with government paying for the largest share of the work) into post-carbon energy systems. With the due caveats about government-funded research, this seems a better approach than Gore's hairshirt agenda (as Jim Manzi, too, has argued in the pages of NR). They may underestimate the sheer technical and economic difficulties of energy-technology progress, but *Break Through* is not intended primarily as a policy tome—it is intended to reorient our general thinking about the environment.

Nordhaus and Shellenberger do, however, run into some trouble in the second half of the book, "The Politics of Possibility." Their premise is that environmental goals can be achieved only through integration with a "progressive" agenda directed at the problems of health care, industrial decline, and the rest of the issues that compose what the authors call the "insecure affluence" of our age. Even within this dubious embrace of "progressivism," there is much to commend. Nordhaus and Shellenberger see the New Deal as old school, and think little of the class warfare of Thomas Frank's *What's the Matter with Kansas?* And they refreshingly part company with the usual liberal condescension toward evangelical Christians, pointing admiringly at the reasons for the flourishing of evangelical mega-churches.

The difficulty with the second half of the book is not so much that it doesn't build the case for the "progressive" agenda from the ground up (which would have required a much longer book), or even that it makes a presumption in favor of liberal policy. This is, after all, a book written chiefly for liberals. But in arguing that liberals need to be more philosophical (hear, hear!), Nordhaus and Shellenberger deploy a number of philosophical categories that are problematic, at the very least, and represent an embrace of the core principles of postmodernism—though, happily, that overused term does not appear in their generally clear and direct prose.

Nordhaus and Shellenberger see economic growth and human ingenuity as the cornerstone of any successful environmentalism.

The duo are against Platonic essentialism when it comes to conceiving nature (including, it would seem, human nature), and for a revival of Deweyite pragmatism as well as an empowering individual "authenticity." The reader gets dizzy at times following the back-and-forth between (on one hand) provocative references to Richard Rorty, Thomas Kuhn, Francis Fukuyama, and the "metaphysics of becoming" and (on the other) more down-to-earth, wonkish discussions of gas-mileage standards for automobiles.

By the end it becomes clear that Nordhaus and Shellenberger aren't just trying to save environmentalism; they are trying to save liberalism, which they consider nearly as intellectually dead as environmentalism.

"Environmentalism is hobbled by its resentment of human strength and our desire to control nature, and liberalism by its resentment of wealth and power," they write. While their interest in rethinking the philosophical first principles and contradictions of modern liberalism is promising, it cuts off the entire right side of the spectrum from the conversation. To be sure, most Republican officeholders view environmental issues with deer-in-the-headlights paralysis and fear, while many conservatives remain—for decent reasons—suspicious of if not hostile to the subject. But for all their shrewd observations on American politics, Nordhaus and Shellenberger must surely know that real policy progress seldom occurs in a climate of political polarization, and few issues are more polarized today than the environment. And there is more openness on the right to serious environmental thought than they might think; Newt Gingrich's new book, *A Contract with the Earth*, intersects closely with Nordhaus and Shellenberger on several points, for example. The environmental movement might have gotten farther had it not chosen to become an adjunct of the Democratic party in a fashion similar to the way the NRA acts within the Republican party.

Nordhaus and Shellenberger give hints that they understand this. The book is no polemic seeking to score cheap points, and—while they make clear their partisan dislike of conservatism—they acknowledge the dynamism of the Right: "Today, 'changing the world' better describes the mission of American conservatism than American liberalism." But they need to decide what they most wish to save—environmentalism or liberalism.

It is not clear their larger errand is being appreciated. The "bad boys" are taking a lot of fire from the Left for their heresies. In *The American Prospect*, Kate Sheppard called the book "a lot of wasted ink" and worse. For this and other reasons Nordhaus and Shellenberger are likely to receive more serious consideration from the Right than from their intended constituency. Above all, conservatives are much more likely than liberals to embrace their central point: "Humans are the most powerful, creative, and adaptive species ever to roam this remarkable planet. We have overcome hunger, disease, and oppression—we can overcome ecological crises." **NR**

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■ MUSIC ■

Beautiful Collecting

JAY NORDLINGER

HUMANS are a collecting race, at least some people say. Some of us collect books, some of us collect hats. And some people collect recordings—LPs, CDs, DVDs, anything that will play. Few discophiles try to collect everything; instead, they specialize, or at least try to narrow down. In the realm of classical music, there are piano guys, violin guys, orchestra guys, voice guys. (For some reason, gals don't collect—as a rule.) I'd like to introduce you to two collectors: a piano man and a voice man.

Our piano man—with apologies to Billy Joel—is Francis Romano, who lives in Baldwin, Long Island, a short ride from Manhattan. He may not be your idea of the classical-music devotee: He was a boxer, and for 20 years trained boxers. He is also North American correspondent of the International Society of the Friends of György Cziffra. Cziffra was a Hungarian pianist, and one of the greatest virtuosos of the 20th century. That's how Romano likes 'em: virtuosic, Romantic, expressive, individualistic, big-hearted. He has no use for mousy Mozarteans (or mousy anyones).

Romano is a New Yorker through and through. He grew up in Flatbush, Brooklyn, and at 16 moved to Bayside, Queens. When he was eleven or twelve, his best friend got a piano and began taking lessons. Francis began taking lessons too. He went to a spinster lady who lived with her spinster sister and loved Paderewski. When he was twelve or thirteen, Francis received from his father a copy of *The Great Pianists*, the now-classic book by Harold C. Schonberg. He read about Golden Age pianists—Paderewski and his brethren: Godowsky, Friedman, Grainger, Hofmann—and wanted to know what it was like to hear them play. When he began collecting, he would find out, and become an international authority.

He encountered Cziffra early on—when he was about fourteen. There was this man with a bad toupee on the cover of an album from the Connoisseur Society. One of the tracks on this album was Wagner's *Tannhäuser* overture, in the Liszt transcription. "To this day," says Romano, "I consider that one of the greatest recordings ever made."

Young Francis loved boxing as well as music, and he sparred with a friend in his grandmother's basement. He later tried his luck at the South Queens Boys Club. No luck: He would not be a champion boxer. But he got a job as an assistant in the gym, and in time became a trainer. He worked with amateurs and pros—one of his fighters was Tunde Foster, a heavyduty lightweight. In his living room—actually, in his listening room—Romano demonstrates a couple of moves, and he looks pretty smooth to me.

And he is eloquent on the similarities between boxers and pianists. The nature of their work is solitary. It involves tremendous preparation, physical and mental. And they engage in a great deal of repetition. These moves, pugilistic and pianistic, have to become second nature. Moreover, both fields feature a number of "head cases."

It was in the mid-1990s, when he was in his mid-30s, that Romano fell hard into the "collection world." He joined the "vast international piano underground," in which people trade recordings, information, stories. For some people, it's a hobby; for others, it's more like an all-consuming obsession. Included here is the "arcane world of the pirates," as Romano says: pirates being illicit recordings made in concert halls around the world. "People have stuff they shouldn't have," says Romano—an understatement.

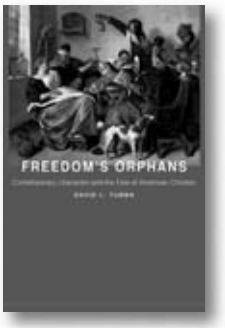
Throughout his listening room are photos of great ones: Liszt, Busoni, Scriabin, Lewenthal, Godowsky, Bolet. There is also a photo of Moriz Rosenthal as an older gent—wearing boxing gloves. Romano has 4,000 LPs, and maybe another 5,000 CDs—commercial and not-so-commercial. The music of Liszt looms large. Romano calls himself a "Liszt-o-maniac," and has about 500 different recordings of the Sonata in B minor alone. His favorite versions? They are by Ernst Levy, Vladimir Horowitz, and Cyprien Katsaris. (This last is a contemporary pianist, and a friend of Romano's.)

Romano is not only a collector and a connoisseur, but an activist, of a kind. He holds concerts in his home, particularly hoping to promote young virtuosos. And, in his capacity as a Cziffra Society capo, he stages events in New York. Last September, he organized an "Hommage à Cziffra," at which he played audio and video recordings of the great man. He also had live pianists—those young virtuosos, playing Cziffra-like music, including transcriptions of their own devising.

There are those who look down on this kind of playing, this kind of music—the Lisztian tradition. Indeed, Romano speaks of a "caste system" among collectors of piano recordings: The high Germanists—those who think the sun rises and sets with the pianist Rudolf Serkin—sneer at the Lisztians. "To them, we're slightly above pond scum," says Romano. But the scrappy kid from Flatbush gives as good as he gets. His criticisms of pianists he considers uninspired are pungent.

The collection world has its share of eccentrics—of the "aberrant-natured," as

Mr. Nordlinger is an NR senior editor. *Here, There & Everywhere: Collected Writings of Jay Nordlinger* is available at Store.NationalReview.com.



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Romano says. He can tell you stories. There are some collectors who are secretive, unwilling to share anything. They'd rather destroy a recording—a rare one, maybe even a unique one—than allow anyone else to hear it. (Others are the soul of generosity, and Romano is one such collector.) There are some who collect pianists they do not like—just to have the recordings. There are a few who buy CDs by the thousands, only to leave them unopened. There they sit, lining houses, sealed up.

And no matter how fanatical the piano people get, says Romano, they're as nothing compared with the voice people: the most fanatical collectors of all.

Ron MacDougall is not a fanatic; he's far too measured and thoughtful a person for that. What he is is extraordinarily dedicated. MacDougall lives in Scarborough, Maine, just outside Portland. His house is on the Nonesuch River—and Nonesuch happens to be the name of a record label. That house is filled with 6,000 LPs, joined by 2,500 CDs. MacDougall is encyclopedic on vocal music—art songs and opera—and his recall is almost total. Indeed, he has a photographic memory, which calls up dates, casts, reviews, and anything and everything. To explore this memory is remarkable.

MacDougall grew up in New Hampshire, in the town of Berlin (pronounced "BURR-lin," to rhyme with "curlin'"). His father had a decent singing voice, though not a trained voice. "He used to sing World War I songs to me, and Irish songs." The family had a Victrola, and such records as "Yes, We Have No Bananas Today." At the tenderest age—three or so—Ron knew that collection by heart, and he loved to crank up that machine, and spin those records.

The big moment came in 1945, when Ron was 14. Igor Gorin, a Ukrainian-born baritone, came to town, to sing a recital. It was in the high-school auditorium, and Ron was amazed by the beauty, power, and control of this voice. He never looked back. Sometime later, another astounding voice came to town: that of George London, the bass-baritone. Sitting in MacDougall's home, I look at the program from that evening—and the signatures of both singer and accompanist. MacDougall has many, many programs, signed and otherwise.

He started buying records, the first of them boasting Jan Peerce: singing "Because." On the flip side was "Bluebird of Happiness." Ron had a buddy who also collected, and they argued about the merits of two other tenors: Caruso and Gigli (with Ron favoring the former). In due course, he discovered yet another tenor, Jussi Bjoerling, the miraculous Swede. And Bjoerling would become his favorite: not just tenor, but singer. When it came time to graduate from high school, Ron's parents gave him the perfect gift: a record player (from Sears, Roebuck).

György Cziffra, Francis Romano's No. 1

EMI

MacDougall earned several degrees and worked several jobs. He taught school in his home state, having among his students David Souter, the future Supreme Court justice. He also worked as a university librarian in Maine, and had a major role in a concert series. MacDougall has never confined himself to listening at home, as some collectors do: engulfed in their vinyl. He has traveled far and wide for concerts and opera, most frequently to Boston and New York. And he knows well that recordings and live performances can diverge: Some are better in the flesh; some are a little worse.

The singers in his personal pantheon, beyond Bjoerling and Caruso? De los Angeles, Sutherland, Warren, and Ghiaurov, among others. Moreover, he likes to keep track of the new singers: He is not a mere nostalgist. When I ask about composers, he names Mozart and Schubert, first and foremost. When I ask about favorite operas, he cites *Così fan tutte* (Mozart) and *Madama Butterfly*. "Of all Puccini's operas, *Butterfly* is holding up best for me. I'm sick of *Tosca*." Don't tell Tosca.

It may be ridiculous to ask a man about his favorite recordings, as he sits among his many thousands of them. But I go ahead. And MacDougall volunteers two opera recordings. One is Bellini's *Puritani*, with Sutherland, Pavarotti, and Ghiaurov. And the other is Massenet's *Manon*, with de los Angeles in the title role, and Monteux conducting. Why these recordings? Because they are "souvenirs"—MacDougall's word—of performances he heard live.

And I think that "souvenir" is excellent, to describe recordings. Some people are vehemently anti-recording. The conductor Sergiu Celibidache famously said that "listening to a record is like going to bed with a picture of Brigitte Bardot." (That dates the remark.) But a recording is at a minimum a souvenir, which is to say, a means of remembrance or preservation—a token of something real, which, of itself, becomes something real.

Toward the end of my visit, I pose a delicate question: Is it an addiction, this collecting? "Yes," says MacDougall. But he has never gone hungry, devoting his earnings to records instead of food. He has neglected his house, however—he might have put a new roof on it. He further speaks of a certain pressure to collect. "I had a friend with whom I was in a kind of competition. We'd go down to Boston and haunt used-record stores. If it hadn't been for him, I wouldn't have bought so many."

But he listens to—feeds himself with—what he has. And he plays me some gems: the unknown Russian tenor Georgi Vinogradov (who recorded in the 1940s); Mark Reizen, a Russian bass, performing at the Bolshoi on his 90th birthday; and Igor Gorin; and Bjoerling. He recalls a story that de los Angeles told: She and Bjoerling were in *Faust*, the Gounod opera, and, from the wings, she listened to him sing his aria. She wept at the beauty of it. MacDougall, too, becomes emotional.

If you collect records because you love music, and wish to fill yourself with it—as Ron MacDougall does, and Francis Romano does: Could there be a more honorable, wholesome, or beautiful pursuit? **NR**

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■ FILM ■

His Didactic Materials

ROSS DOUTHAT

MIDWAY through *The Golden Compass*, Chris Weitz's adaptation of the first volume of *His Dark Materials*, Philip Pullman's famously theophobic fantasy saga, the plucky, flame-haired heroine, Lyra Belacqua, falls in with an armored polar bear named Iorek Byrnison. An exile from his Arctic kingdom, Byrnison seems to have a weakness for whisky (as opposed to the Coke his relatives in our world are always swigging around Christmas-time), and his most recent bender gave the local townsfolk the opening they needed to swipe his breastplate and helmet out from under his snout. Fortunately, Lyra has an "alethiometer"—the golden compass of the title, a clockwork device that tells her the truth of any situation—and she twists the dials, concentrates hard, and informs Byrnison that his missing armor is being kept under lock and key at "the Magisterium's offices," which are conveniently located just down the street.

Now the "Magisterium" is, as any reader of Pullman well knows, an alternative-universe version of Roman Catholicism, and thus its "offices" are better described as the local, well, church. But attaching the "ch" word, whether uppercase or lower, to the black-hearted villains of a $180 million Christmas-time blockbuster was apparently a bridge too far for New Line Cinema, so "offices" it is, and I imagine that only the more alert moviegoers will notice that the doors Byrnison breaks down in search of his armor are flanked by what appear to be Byzantine-style icons of the twelve apostles. Like the almost-clerical collars of the Magisterium's flunkies and the tossed-off reference to "heresy!" in the midst of an academic discussion of alternative worlds, the icons are palimpsests of Pullman's village atheism—the not-quite-erased traces of the story that even devoutly anti-Christian Hollywood didn't have the guts to tell.

Not that I blame them, exactly, though I do wonder what Weitz plans to do if he's offered the chance to adapt the later volumes, where scrubbing away the polemical aspects of Pullman's story will require getting rid of 99 percent of the plot. Perhaps he thought to go easy on the anti-theological elements in the first movie, in the hopes of banking enough box office to make the more controversial aspects of the saga an easier sell. If this calculation pays off, I'll be duly impressed, but on the evidence of this film I wouldn't bet on New Line's investing a similarly princely sum to make installments two and three.

Not that the movie is terrible by any means—its fantasy world is handsome and occasionally dazzling, and there are fine turns from Dakota Blue Richards as Lyra and Nicole Kidman as her wicked fairy godmother, Mrs. Coulter. But Weitz, having carved away the story's ideological soul, seems determined to stuff absolutely everything else in, while somehow keeping the running time below two hours. The result is a movie crammed with incident and nothing else. *The Golden Compass* leaps from scene to scene without a pause for breath, let alone conversation, and I can't imagine how anyone who hasn't read the books will keep up with the full-speed-ahead tour through Pullman's universe. (Perhaps with that in mind, a third of the dialogue seems to consist of ejaculations written in to keep the audience apprised of who or what the characters are looking at: "Bolvangar!" "Serafina Pekkala!" "The country of the Samoyards!")

Here's a beginners' guide to making sense of it all: Richards's Lyra is an orphan raised in the gothic precincts of Jordan College, Oxford, in a version of our world where everyone is born with an animal familiar called a "daemon," which shape-shifts throughout childhood and settles into a single form—cat or dog, reptile or fowl—with the onset of puberty. This magical twist, Pullman's finest invention by far, coexists with Victorian technology, Jazz Age clothes, and the tyranny of the Magisterium, not to mention witches and talking polar bears and a seafaring version of the Roma called "Gyptians." (Got all that?) And binding everything together are the mysterious particles called "Dust," which are the source of the controversy that sets the plot in motion. To Lyra's Uncle Asriel (Daniel Craig), an adventurer-scientist in the Jules Verne mode, Dust promises to open gateways to alternative universes whose existence the Magisterium denies. To the authorities, played by Derek Jacobi and Christopher Lee in vanishingly brief cameos, the particles are a physical manifestation of Original Sin, an affliction the Magisterium is determined to "cure" by any tactic necessary.

The means they choose generate the movie's only real chills: Under the supervision of Kidman's Mrs. Coulter, who dresses as though one of Jay Gatsby's parties might break out at any moment, the Magisterium is kidnapping unlucky children and hauling them off to a research station in the frozen north, where a process called "intercision" promises to separate them from their daemons and turn them into the dull automatons that every religious organization dreams of having in its pews. Two of these kidnappees are Lyra's Oxford chums, which is just one of several plot devices that set her on her way northward, picking up allies along the way: a ship full of Gyptians, Byrnison the armored bear (voiced by Ian McKellen), the American cowboy-aeronaut Lee Scoresby (Sam Elliott, inevitably), and an ethereal witch with a flair for archery (Eva Green).

The resulting quest has a slew of gorgeous, FX-laden establishing shots and an expensive-looking polar-bear battle, but little else to recommend it. And even the film's CGI loveliness grows tiresome after a while: Like George Lucas's botched *Star Wars* prequels, *The Golden Compass* conjures up a world that's too painterly to be believed, with landscapes and interiors coated in the gloss of computer generation, rather than the grit of real life. It's telling that Peter Jackson, whose *Lord of the Rings* saga has spawned a host of imitators but no equals, cut his teeth on low-budget splatter movies. When you're trying to bring a fantastic landscape to life, a little goo and gore makes all the difference.

In the case of *The Golden Compass*, an extra 45 minutes of movie wouldn't have hurt, either. Sitting through Weitz's film as it exists, it isn't hard to envision a more leisurely movie that took the time—and the risks—necessary to make more sense of Pullman's world, rather just rushing madly from one set-piece to another. But only if you close your eyes. **NR**

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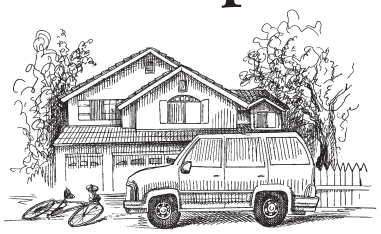
■ THE STRAGGLER ■

Maps and Chaps



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

CARTOGRAPHY has been in the news recently. It was just 500 years ago this April that a German monk named Martin Waldseemüller produced the first world map to use the name "America" for our continent. Only one copy of that map survived the centuries. It is in the Library of Congress, which currently has it on display to mark the quincentenary.

The Waldseemüller map is something of a mystery. It shows the Americas approximately as they are, joined by an isthmus, separated from Asia by a large ocean. There is the mystery. Balboa reached the Pacific by land only in 1513 (six years before "stout Cortez," of course); Magellan reached the ocean by sea, and named it, only in 1520. So how did Waldseemüller know about it in 1507? Even more peculiar, his later maps—1513, 1516—dropped the Pacific altogether, the later one rejoining the Americas to the Asian mainland. Ah, Martin: As any experienced marker of examination papers could tell you, your first thought is usually correct.

As a map geek myself, I feel a faint bond with Brother Martin across the centuries. I adore maps, and always have. As some very bookish persons are said not to believe in any event or phenomenon until they have read about it, a place is never quite real to me until I have scrutinized a map of it. No mere street map will do, either, no footling Rand McNally or Google Map for me. I want a proper topographic map, one that shows contour lines, spot elevations, boundaries, railroads, footpaths, waterways, aqueducts, woodlands, swamps, tidal flats, antiquities (sadly lacking here in the New World), bathymetric data . . . the works. I want degrees, minutes, and seconds. I want grid, true, and magnetic north, with a figure for annual variation. I want scales, metric and imperial.

Here, for example, is the U.S. Geological Survey 1:24,000-scale map of my district, published in 1967 and "photorevised" in 1979. I acquired it as soon as I moved here. From it I learn that my suburban sixth of an acre stands at 240 feet above sea level. Global warming? No threat to me! That's as high as the land gets hereabouts; though High Hill, three miles to our south, towers up to nearly 400 feet. The road from our house to the village, I further note, drops 160 feet in 2,800—a gradient of better than 1 in 17. That's as steep as it gets, road-wise; though the hillsides sheltering Cold Spring Harbor, over to our west, attain slopes of 1 in 2 here and there—well-nigh precipitous in this mild landscape.

Cartophilia (not in Webster's *Third*, but should be) is a guy thing, I feel pretty sure. I have no real idea, but would be willing to place a small bet, that notable female cartographers have been as rare as female mathematicians, composers, or chess champions. If I am right, there is no doubt a feminist explanation available, leaning on "oppression," "exclusion," and "exploitation." Possibly that explanation is correct; but I think folk wisdom is closer to the truth: Maps were invented by males so that we would not have to stop and ask for directions.

There is certainly a mathematical component to cartophilia. It was his work on geodetic surveys in Hanover and Bavaria that inspired Carl Friedrich Gauss to thoughts about the properties of curved surfaces. Those thoughts eventually, if indirectly, generated the modern discipline of differential geometry and the theory of General Relativity. To the arithmetically inclined, a map invites calculations, like those I just did for my neighborhood gradients. And as well as math coming *out* of maps, it is of course the case that a lot of math goes *into* the making of them.

The appeal of maps is ultimately aesthetic, though, and not entirely the "cold" aesthetics of math and logic. The standard U.S.G.S. 1:24,000 topographic maps are things of beauty as well as utility. The folds and puckerings of the earth where contour lines crowd together; the pinks, blues, and greens of terrain and water; the speckled settlements of humanity and the circulatory system of streets and highways that nourishes us; who can resist it all? Well, I suppose a lot of people can, but I can't.

The gold standard in topographic maps is not the U.S.G.S. but Britain's Ordnance Survey. I possess old 1:25,000 O.S. sheets—popularly known as the 2½-inch series (because 1:25,000 is very nearly 2½ inches to a mile)—covering most of my home county, as it was in my childhood, "Price 4s. 6d. net" per sheet. There is no copping out here, as on the U.S.G.S. maps, with pink splotches for built-up areas: Every block, garden, and alley is meticulously marked. Large buildings are given their precise shapes. Our local cinema had an annex of two or three stores off at one side, and here they are, protruding just where I recall them. Here is my street, my school, the woods we raided for birds' nests, the canals we almost drowned in, the orchards we were chased out of by angry proprietors, the eccentrically named country villages (Preston Deanery, Easton Neston, Buttock's Booth) that we cycled through.

And the history, of course: battlefields, hill forts, "tumulus," "Roman road," and a melancholy notation, in Gothic script: "Church (Remains of)." That ruined church is the only relict of a village abandoned during the Black Death. Heaven only knows how the Ordnance Survey people conquered the landscape in such infinite detail in the days before satellites, before even comprehensive aerial photography.

I have lost a good many books, photographs, and memorabilia in my travels, but somehow have kept all my maps. Street maps, bus maps, subway maps, my father's old cycling maps, hotel and car-rental-company maps, and those excellent road maps that gas stations used to give out free. Some of them are decades out of date—close to a century, in the case of the cycling maps. In the age of GPS and Google, I suppose they are all as superfluous as slide rules or suspender belts, but I can't let them go. Together they form a sort of meta-map of my peregrinations, the itinerary of a life. What on earth was I doing in Alamogordo, N.M.? NR

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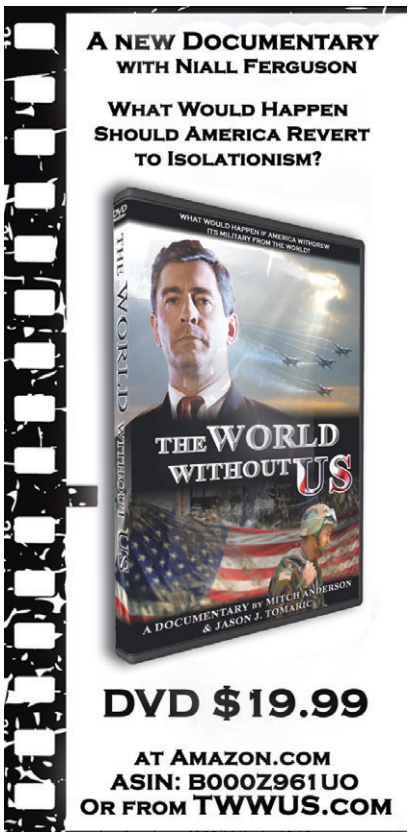
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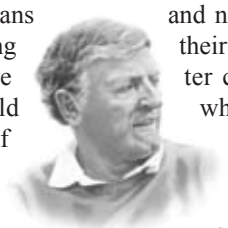
Questions of Life And Death

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 27

It is incorrect to assume that all the pro-abortion and anti-abortion arguments have been made. They are centerpieces in vivid, resourceful, emotional, and inquisitive thought. Witness the continuing, and intense, curiosity about the presidential candidates and how they feel on the basic issues. The contrasts are stark between the Democratic side and the Republican side. Among the Democrats, all the announced candidates refer to abortion "rights," and Clinton, Obama, Edwards, and Dodd have all promised to appoint judges who believe in a woman's "right to privacy"—the code word for unlimited access to abortion. Among the Republicans there is genuine debate, ranging from Giuliani, who says that he is "pro-life" but that he would decline to press for a reversal of *Roe* v. *Wade*, to Huckabee, who wants not only to reverse that decision but to enact a Human Life Amendment.



Also in the news is birth control. Consider poor Afghanistan. One would not have thought that contraception was high on the agenda of that beleaguered country. And yet American promoters of birth control have been having great success there. Afghan women, to be sure, are not aiming for the two-child family, which would violate Muslim law. But increasing numbers are enthusiastic about finding an effective means for postponing the next pregnancy a year or two, an urgent matter in a country with a horrific rate of death in pregnancy and childbirth. The mayor of a town in Kabul province eagerly told a Western visitor, "Eight months ago, talking about contraception was a taboo. Nowadays people easily talk about birth-spacing practice and its importance. No matter where people get together, birth spacing has become a value within our people, and they know it's the most effective and quick way to reduce maternal and child death."

This is not the poppycock that we are familiar with here, where a principal concern has been the difficulty in negotiating birth control when deliriously engaged in carefree sex. The standard birth-control pill can have rare but serious side-effects, especially blood clots, which can lead to heart attack or stroke. A new form, the POP (progestin-only pill), commonly known as the "mini-pill," has fewer side-effects but about twice the failure rate. And for both types, the failure rate increases sharply if the woman fails to take it, not only every day, but at the same time every day. And of course, there will be women who were not expecting to have sexual intercourse on a particular occasion and took no precautions at all. To deal with their problem, nice devices and not-so-nice devices have made their way to the market. In the latter category are the abortionists, who rely heavily on their casuistry.

More hygienic, though still highly controversial, is the so-called morning-after pill. Many pro-lifers regard it as an abortifacient, although unlike the earlier RU-486, which is undeniably in that category, the morning-after pill theoretically works not by killing an already-fertilized egg, but by forestalling fertilization in the first place. Even so, there was a storm of protest last year when the FDA changed it from a prescription-only drug to one available over the counter to women over the age of 18. Now a pharmacist in Illinois has filed suit in the state supreme court to overturn an executive order by the governor requiring pharmacies to dispense the drug. The pharmacist argues: "I make no attempt to interfere with your interest or pursuit of any of these therapies. But I shouldn't be compelled to help you do something I find to be morally unconscionable."

It isn't yet obvious whether the heavy forces of natural law will speak out on the issues, and if so when. In the meantime, the questions will keep the presidential candidates maneuvering, and the courts busy.

You Live with It

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 30

Sixty years ago I was the editor of the daily newspaper at college, and one memorable day in September, plotting the year's business, we got word that the two big tobacco companies (R. J. Reynolds and Philip Morris) were suspending all their ads in the college press. The news was greeted with dismay both by editors who smoked ("We'll just die from something else," they harrumphed) and by those who did not, equally affected by this big hole in the advertising budget. Sixty years!

Pffft! This past June, a member of Congress from California and 40 of her colleagues wrote to the publishers of several magazines protesting their publication of ads for a new variety of Camel cigarette. The protesters complained that the ads and the packaging for Camel No. 9 were designed to have special appeal to girls and young women. The manufacturers have always insisted that their ads aren't intended to lure people to begin smoking, but simply to draw existing smokers away from the competitor's brand. But the congresswoman was well briefed on how to treat such sophistry.

And just this week, the *New York Times* reported that cigarette makers are walking away from print ads for their products and concentrating their marketing efforts on venues (bars and nightclubs, specialized websites) where they are less likely to attract the attention of teenagers. The reporter's narrative recalled the days when ads advised smokers that "More doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette," or that Chesterfield was "best for you," but settling down, finally, on the one sure ground the tobacco industry rests on: Newport cigarettes are "alive with pleasure."

The ads, of course, took no account of those who were dead, presumably

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without pleasure. But practically no one has led a lifetime removed from the debate. There is often the felt need to recount personal stories, which add spice and perhaps a little useful feeling to the argument.

My own story is that I am the founder of a doughty magazine which, if space was solicited tomorrow by a tobacco company, would agree to sell the space. We would come up with serious arguments featuring personal independence and pain/pleasure correlations to justify selling the space, but I would need to weep just a little bit on the inside over the simple existence of tobacco.

Again, the personal story. My wife began smoking (furtively) when 15, which is about when I also began. When we were both 27, on the morning after a high-pitched night on the town for New Year's Eve, we resolved on mortification of the flesh to make up for our excesses: We both gave up smoking. The next morning, we decided to divorce—nothing less than that would distract us from the pain we were suffering. We came to, and flipped a coin—the winner could resume smoking. I lost, and for deluded years thought myself the real loser, deprived of cigarettes. Half a year ago my wife died, technically from an infection, but manifestly, at least in part, from a body weakened by 60 years of nonstop smoking. I stayed off the cigarettes but went to the idiocy of cigars inhaled, and suffer now from emphysema, which seems determined to outpace heart disease as a human killer.

Stick me in a confessional and ask the question: Sir, if you had the authority, would you forbid smoking in America? You'd get a solemn and contrite, Yes. Solemn because I would be violating my secular commitment to the free marketplace. Contrite, because my relative indifference to tobacco poison for so many years puts me in something of the position of the Zyklon B defendants after World War II. These folk manufactured the special gas used in the death camps to genocidal ends. They pleaded, of course, that as far as they were concerned, they were simply technicians, putting together chemicals needed in wartime for fumigation. Some got away with that defense; others, not.

Those who fail to protest the free passage of tobacco smoke in the air come close to the Zyklon defendants in pleading ignorance.

Lights! Action!

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 21

The strike by the stagehands against the Broadway theaters is of personal interest to far more people than the stagehands themselves, the producers, and the actors. It gives special pain to, among others, theatergoers, restaurant owners, and cab drivers.

It is difficult to opine in the matter of the actual conflict because the terms of the quarrel are elusive. It is about money, ultimately, but not in a way that lends itself to economic analysis of the conventional kind. The producers claim that union work rules force them to overhire, and that stagehands are often paid for doing nothing. The stagehands' union hotly denies the charge and accuses the producers of showing a lack of respect. The strife continues as these words are written, with neither side so far being willing to budge.

We are informed that there are stagehands who earn $100,000 per year, and producers whose plays bring in $100,000 per night. But that conveys only one part of the picture. Theater is a precarious enterprise. The least circumstance can suffice to close down a play, or to prevent it from being launched. Both sides suffer when that occurs. It would be possible to write a seductive, even a poignant play based on the privations of theater producers; as also, of stagehands. The inclination in such matters is quite correctly to decline to formulate adjudications in terms of justice.

The question arises, What can anyone outside the conflict do about it? It is a sound principle for government to decline intercession in labor-management disputes unless the community is seriously threatened. The famous formulation was that of Calvin Coolidge, who said that there is no right to strike against the public interest. But he was talking about a strike by the police. It would be a challenge to devise persuasive means of arguing that having 27 theaters closed affects the public interest as greatly as being without police protection. Even bus drivers are not stopped from striking, although when that happens an entire city can be immobilized.

This is not to say that the community is not suffering from this strike. The people who traveled to New York for the purpose of seeing a play will go back home having not seen it. Unlike the movies, access to plays is limited. And others who would have come to New York for that purpose will change their plans. One estimate puts at 65 percent the proportion of Broadway audiences who do not live in New York City. The last time there was a strike against Broadway theaters, city businesses lost an estimated $7 million per day.

And there are other, non-economic considerations. It's obvious that missing a Broadway show will not be a life-threatening event. But the stage has a magic that can transform evenings, and sometimes even lives. Its ability to make us laugh or weep provides one of the buoyancies that give us joy.

What would serve the public interest, it would seem clear, is a formula of some kind that would leave the entities free to carry on their dispute while continuing to provide their services: the stagehands' union free to set its demands, the producers to state their own. But if the services forgone aren't critical enough to justify government intercession—as Mayor Michael Bloomberg has rightly decided—that should not stop the search for an architecture by which to guard against future deadlock.

It is left to the imagination of the mayor and other public figures to set forth proposals that would lead in the right direction. One hopes that there are dramatic resources available to hew out one more provision by which contending parties agree to govern themselves.

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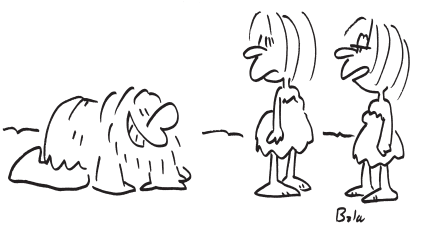

"Oh, he can walk upright whenever he wants to—he just likes to look up skirts."

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Hollywood Bombs

We're all familiar with the famous plot of Mel Brooks's *The Producers*: A wily impresario figures out an accounting scheme to make a fortune by producing the world's all-time mega-flop musical, *Springtime for Hitler*. To date, Brooks has got a film and a show and a film-of-the-show out of this inspired idea. But, if he's minded to go to the well a fourth time, he might like to modify the plot and make it the tale of a wily filmmaker who figures out an accounting scheme to make a fortune by producing the world's all-time mega-flop anti–Iraq War movie.

Mark Cuban and Brian De Palma's *Redacted* is not exactly *Springtime for Saddam*, but its flopperooniness is something to marvel at. In its first three weeks, the movie earned $60,456 at the box office. Which would be a disappointing take for your cousin's summer-stock production of *Brigadoon* in a leaky barn theater in Maine, but is apparently a respectable haul for an award-winning motion picture ballyhooed for weeks on end in the national press. "The film traffics in, and clearly means to provoke, strong, unbalanced emotions," declares A. O. Scott in his review for the *New York Times*. The strongest unbalanced emotion it provokes is a powerful visceral urge to say, "Well, I was thinking of going to the movies this weekend, but I figured I'd stay home and wash my hair."

In the same period, *Beowulf* grossed $75,983,000. *Redacted* has been seen by approximately 7,000 people, an audience size one would not have thought possible for a motion picture on nationwide release pre-garlanded with prestigious European awards (Best Anti-Bush Picture at the Venice Film Festival, etc.) from a major director who's been assiduously promoting the film to A-list media outlets for months. It would have made more sense for *Redacted* to do house calls.

Redacted is not to be confused with its fellow anti-war film *Rendition*. One is about American intelligence agents torturing innocent people, the other's about American soldiers raping innocent people. They're probably entirely different Oscar categories—Best Original Waterboarding vs. Best Rape of a Foreign-Language Actress. Never let it be said you don't get a wide choice at the multiplex. "It's a love letter to Hitler!" marvels Max Bialystock, stumbling on the script of *Springtime for Hitler* and hastening to assure its deeply sincere Nazi author that they want to help him show the world the real Führer, "the Hitler with a song in his

heart." But you can't satirize show business anymore. Even Bialystock & Bloom might have balked at a show in which the GIs are rapists, and the torch songs are torture songs—though that's not to say *Redacted! The Musical* wouldn't have been a better bet for De Palma.

Why have these films tanked? Roger L. Simon, a screenwriter himself, made the point that these films are "essentially inauthentic." "The filmmakers think they are supposed to be antiwar, but they don't feel it in their guts," he writes. "This feels to me like a cinema of 'received wisdom,' not based on personal experience or 'emotional knowledge' of any kind."

That sounds right. One reason the Oscar shows of the early Seventies are such a hoot compared with the butt-numbing snoozeroos of today is the tension and sniping between the John Wayne/Bob Hope/Frank Sinatra set and the hipster crowd reading out telegrams from the Viet Cong. Back then, being anti-war meant taking a side. In today's Hollywood, being anti-war is the only side. I don't believe Brian De Palma can tell you why he opposes the Iraq War. In fact, I doubt he thinks about it all that much. And when he does, he thinks about it through the prism of Vietnam. And you can't make that template fit.

In a way, there's something heartening about the inability of so many Hollywood A-listers to make a decent anti-war film. For a start, they're all about the wickedness of the troops or Dick Cheney or some shadowy agency deep inside the administration. The actual "enemy" are largely absent. They fulfill the same role the natives do in old-school British Empire yarns: an exotic distant backdrop for conflicts played out between two different groups of white man. These days, there are "bad" Americans (the Pentagon, CIA, Halliburton) and a "good" American (usually a lawyer, journalist, or stonewalled spouse) who blows the whistle. But the glamorous guerrilla of yore is hard to transplant to the new conflict: To convey one of the chaps wreaking havoc in the Sunni Triangle or the Hindu Kush with any honesty, he'd have to be shown as theocratic, misogynist, and homophobic. You might as well make him a Republican congressman.

Even Brian De Palma, George Clooney, and Robert Redford can't figure out a way to sell us radical Islam: In a way that Che & Co. aren't, the Islamist is not just anti-American but explicitly anti-Hollywood. To film a scene in which an insurgent on his way home after a hard day battling the American occupier runs into some babe in a really hot burqa and they do a little incendiary dialogue and her burqa drops from her shoulders in one shimmering sultry move and they writhe around on the bed to some overwrought power ballad on the soundtrack, to apply all the Hollywood clichés to the glamorized enemy would be as preposterous a clash between subject and form as the title song in *Springtime for Hitler*: a *Redactio ad absurdum*.

So, fearful that its multiculti pieties might be disturbed by what it finds, Hollywood can only produce films about one side in this conflict. That makes for lousy movies, but it tells us something rather profound about the nature of this struggle. **NR**

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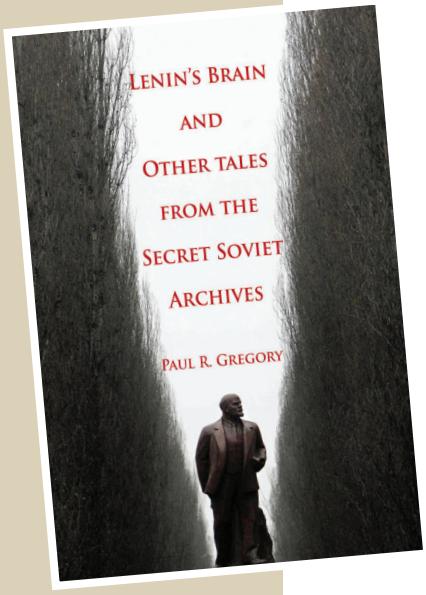

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